

# THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN

Fifth President of Princeton Theological Seminary  
*Dr. Thomas W. Gillespie*

"Piety and Learning"

*Ronald C. White, Jr.*

*Editorial*

Christian Freedom in Calvin's Theology

*Jane Dempsey Douglass*

*Warfield Lecture, Spring 1983*

The Reader's Digest Bible

*Bruce M. Metzger*

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*An Interview*

The Word, the Media, and the Marketplace

*Daniel Jenkins*

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John Knox: The Main Themes of His Thought

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Sermons

"It's You I'm Calling"

*Freda A. Gardner*

"We Have This Treasure"

*Bernhard W. Anderson*



VOLUME IV, NUMBER 2 NEW SERIES 1983

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# The Princeton Seminary Bulletin

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Ronald C. White, Jr., Editor

J. J. M. Roberts, Book Review Editor

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THE PRINCETON SEMINARY BULLETIN



*Dr. Thomas W. Gillespie*

## Fifth President of Princeton Theological Seminary

The Board of Trustees of Princeton Theological Seminary has announced the appointment of Dr. Thomas W. Gillespie as the fifth President of the institution. Gillespie is the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Burlingame, California, where he has served since 1966. In assuming the presidency on September 1st, he will head the seminary that educates the largest number of candidates for the professional ministry in the United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, as well as students representing over 90 other denominations.

Gillespie earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1971 from the Claremont Graduate School in New Testament Studies. He received the Bachelor of Divinity degree from Princeton Seminary and the Bachelor of Arts from George Pepperdine College in Los Angeles. Before beginning his pastorate in Burlingame, he was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Garden Grove, California.

An author of articles and reviews in the *Journal of Biblical Literature* and *Theology Today*, as well as other religious publications, Gillespie has been Adjunct Professor at three California seminaries. He is an ordained minister in the United Presbyterian Church and a member of the Presbytery of San Francisco. He has served the denomination as a member of its delegation to the Consultation on Church Union, a member of its Task Force on Biblical Authority and Interpretation, and the Chairman of its Standing Committee on Theological Education.

Gillespie succeeds Dr. James I. McCord, President of the Seminary for 24 years and former President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. McCord will become Chancellor of the Center of Theological Inquiry, an ecumenical post-doctoral institute for theological research located in Princeton.

Dr. Gillespie is married to the former Barbara Lugenbill. They have three children.

# "PIETY AND LEARNING"

by RONALD C. WHITE, JR., EDITOR

Through the years many have lingered over these words at the beginning of the Princeton Seminary catalogue:

With all the changes that history brings, Princeton Seminary is still committed to the express purpose of its original founders who declared that "piety of heart" must be combined with "solid learning," because, as they put it, "religion without learning or learning without religion in ministers of the gospel must ultimately prove injurious to the church."

In pondering this founding purpose two questions come to mind. What did the concepts of "piety" and "learning" mean to the Seminary founders? How are the evolving patterns of piety and learning to be combined today?

## I

The first question is pertinent because light on the founders' understandings of piety and learning is to be found in the new publication by Lefferts A. Loetscher, *Facing the Enlightenment and Pietism, Archibald Alexander and the Founding of Princeton Theological Seminary*. Dr. Loetscher, Professor of American Church History for more than three decades at Princeton Seminary, completed this volume shortly before his death in 1981. It has been published by Greenwood Press in association with the Presbyterian Historical Society. The Society presented a copy to President James I. McCord at Alumni Day in Princeton and to President-elect Thomas W. Gillespie at the Alumni Dinner in conjunction with the General Assembly in Atlanta. This volume is commended to all alumni/ae.

"Piety" and "learning" are generic terms for realities known in all generations. At the philosophical level they refer to the subjective and the objective. At the personal level we are speaking of the heart and the head. But these terms have historical faces. Indeed, a central theme in the story of American Christianity has been the tension between piety and learning.

The founding of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1812 occurred in the vortex of such a tension. The affirmation of both piety and learning in the founding plan of the Seminary grew out of both the problems and possibilities of a new Seminary in the new nation. Professor Loetscher shows how the Seminary came into being precisely at the moment when the Enlightenment and Pietism—"two antagonistic but partially parallel movements"—were encountering each other. Archibald Alexander, the first professor, brought to the Seminary a consciousness of both the resources and excesses in the traditions of piety and learning.

Pietism had grown up in the seventeenth century as a reaction to the lifeless orthodoxy of the Lutheran and Reformed churches of the continent. Emphasizing experience, pietism was kindled in America by the fires of revivalism. Alexander experienced what he called variously a "new birth" and "regeneration" as a teenager in Virginia. This occurred in a campaign at the beginning of what would become known as the Second Great Awakening. As a young man Alexander talked with many who had been converted in the Great Awakening.

For Alexander the affirmation of piety was always in tension with the excesses of what he called "enthusiasm." Many of the first students at the Seminary were products of the Second Great Awakening. Alexander lectured on the centrality of the "affections" in the Christian life but at the same time was hesitant to speak much about the inward dimensions of his own faith journey. Students gathered for worship in Alexander's home or in the Oratory in what is known today as Alexander Hall. The Seminary encouraged opportunities for students to talk together about piety, a practice not unlike patterns at Yale and Andover in these same years. Yet Alexander was critical of the leading revivalist of his own day, Charles G. Finney, for not emphasizing enough the importance of instruction and learning.

In Alexander's affirmation of learning he brought to the new Seminary a theological heritage rooted in seventeenth-century Reformed scholasticism. The textbook he assigned his first students was not the *Institutes* of John Calvin but the *Institutes* of Francis Turretin (1622-1687). In this approach natural theology was to be a preparation for revealed theology. There was an embrace of the methodology of reason. In the first decades of the Seminary, Alexander's own pilgrimage led him, perhaps because of consternation about the excesses of enthusiasm, to more and more reliance on an objective basis of faith which he found in a view of the Bible that would come to characterize the Old Princeton Theology.

While extolling learning, Alexander was critical of the "rationalism" which he identified as an excess of the Enlightenment. All three principal leaders of the Seminary, Samuel Miller, appointed the second professor in 1813, Ashbel Green, the first President of the Board of Directors, and Alexander, had personal contact with the religious variant of the Enlightenment, Deism, and sought to combat it at every turn. By the time of the founding of the Seminary, Deism was on the wane but Unitarianism was the new strain of "rational Christianity" gone astray.

## II

History provides an indispensable past tense on the relation of piety and learning which each of us can update in the present tense—yea, present tension. As in Alexander's day, many come to Seminary fresh from an *experience* of faith. Once they are here it is faith seeking understanding. Once they leave it is a lifelong journey of finding the proper balance or creative tension between the two. For some, learning overwhelms experience and piety becomes something left behind for the unenlightened. John A. Mackay commented upon this posture: "Theological sophistication without spiritual commitment ends in pompous sterility." For others the learning of Seminary days is placed aside and the old pieties are simply recycled in the flush of new responsibilities in ministry. The publication dates of the theological books on the pastor's shelves serve to identify the three years of a Seminary degree program with but a few practical books added in the intervening years.

But for those for whom Seminary studies are but an introduction to lifelong learning, the challenge of staying alive to both piety and learning is ever present. We can be grateful that the resources are wider today than ever before. Catholic authors Henry Nouwen and Avery Dulles are as useful to Protestant ministers

as to Catholic clergy. A dramatic renaissance is occurring in the tradition of piety through fresh contact with Catholic and Orthodox spirituality. The popularity of courses in Christian spiritual formation, in both the degree and continuing education offerings, suggests the hunger for authentic piety. And it is not just courses *on* prayer but opportunities *to* pray that ministers and laity are seeking! *The Bulletin* intends to speak to this renaissance in coming issues.

The most difficult task may be how to combine piety and learning. It is not simply that many veer off in one direction or the other. We may affirm both piety and learning, but integration is the greater challenge. Alexander espoused this integration but it is Loetscher's conclusion that "he never fully integrated his heritage of pietism and his more formal orthodox rationalism." For example, Alexander testified to the importance of the Holy Spirit in commending experience but seemed unwilling to emphasize the Reformed doctrine of the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit in constructing a doctrine of the Bible as the Word of God.

The challenge of integration is before all of us. It confronts modern Seminaries where the specialization of the University has tended to dictate the patterns of theological education. It intersects the ministry where the ethos of professionalism can elevate product over process. In a world that since 1812 has tended more and more towards division and specialization, the vision of the integration of piety and learning offers more than ever a possibility of wholeness.

As this editorial is being completed the news of the death of Dr. John A. Mackay has come. The most direct route from my office at Adams House to Speer Library is across Library Place and in the side entrance. But to this day I find myself taking the longer route to the main entrance because of my continuing fascination with the words of dedication in the foyer. Anyone who knew Dr. Mackay would know without needing to be told that he penned those words. Dedicated to Robert E. Speer, the words really sum up the vision of Princeton Seminary from Alexander to Speer to Mackay to McCord and beyond.

Within these walls the light of learning may illumine the life of piety in the service of Jesus Christ the truth.

An invitation to the library, these words suggest a larger invitation to combine piety and learning in the service of Jesus Christ.

# Christian Freedom in Calvin's Theology: The Foundation and Significance of Christian Freedom

by JANE DEMPSEY DOUGLASS

Warfield Lecture, Spring 1983

EMANCIPATION into freedom through the liberality of God's work in the incarnation for those who have been oppressed by bondage and wearied by anxiety of conscience<sup>1</sup>—these are the terms in which Calvin frames his basic understanding of Christian freedom.

In the theological world of Calvin's day there are at least two distinguishable polemics in process concerning freedom. One is the debate about the natural freedom of human beings since the fall. This is the debate about justification. What can a person since the fall contribute to justification in God's eyes? Can a person by purely natural capacities produce genuine contrition for sin? Can a person behave in such a manner as to influence God's decision concerning salvation? Can salvation in any sense be merited? How is grace necessary for justification?

But there is another polemic raging regarding freedom: that is the question of freedom within the Christian community, the freedom of those who recognize themselves as members of the body of Christ. What difference has justification made in the nature of life to be led? To what extent must Christians continue to obey the law? What kinds of church laws are proper? Should

*A native of Delaware, Ms. Dempsey is an alumna of Syracuse University, the University of Geneva, Radcliffe College, and Harvard University. For the last twenty years she has been Professor of Church History at the School of Theology at Claremont at Claremont Graduate School. This lecture was the first in Princeton Seminary's 1982-83 Warfield Lecture Series.*

Christians feel bound in conscience to obey church laws made by mere human beings? Does the Spirit teach directly and spontaneously what Christians should do? How should Protestants observe Sunday? Or does it need to be observed at all? Must they still observe traditional seasons of fasting? Should there be candles on the altar? Or no altar at all?

Calvin felt that both questions concerning freedom had very profound pastoral implications and wrote prolifically on both. In fact they are necessarily interrelated. But it is the second to which we will devote these lectures.

From the beginning of Calvin's career as a Protestant theologian, he gave serious attention to Christian freedom. In his first edition of the *Institutes* of 1536, the whole sixth and final chapter is built around issues of freedom in relation to ecclesiastical power and political administration. At the opening of the chapter he calls this freedom "a matter of prime necessity; . . . without a knowledge of it consciences dare undertake almost nothing without faltering; often hesitate and draw back; constantly waver and are afraid . . . unless this freedom be grasped, neither Christ nor gospel truth is rightly known."<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *Inst.*, II, xi, 9.

<sup>2</sup> 1536 *Inst.*, 6 (O.S. I, pp. 223-24).

chapter closes with Pauline advice which Calvin sees as a goad to the believer's courage: those redeemed by Christ at such great cost should not re-enslave themselves to the wicked and impious desires of human beings but rather obey God.<sup>3</sup> Quirinius Breen says of this chapter:

This is in many respects the most interesting. . . . One-fifth of the book is given to it. Few people have associated the name of Calvin with the idea of liberty. Let them study this great chapter.<sup>4</sup>

This discussion is carried through to the 1559 final edition of the *Institutes* and expanded along the way, overflowing into other sections, and continuing to play a central role in Calvin's thought. A rough count in Battles' concordance<sup>5</sup> to the Latin text of the 1559 *Institutes* identifies over seven hundred uses of words derived from the basic Latin term for liberty or freedom.

Yet as Breen suggests, to talk about Calvin in relation to freedom—even the freedom of the Christian life—seems to many not unacquainted with Calvin's theology or the Reformed tradition to be an unlikely choice. After all, was it not in Geneva that Servetus was burned for heresy? Did Calvin care about Servetus' freedom? What did Calvin himself know about freedom—a rather shy man who was forced into exile by both Protestants and Catholics, who was ill so much of his life, who

was threatened by Farel with the curse of God if he would not stay in Geneva in the first place against all his personal desires to devote himself to study and who returned only reluctantly from his exile in Strasbourg? How could Calvin possibly know anything about freedom?<sup>6</sup> From countless examinations written by students who have studied in other seminaries than Claremont or Princeton come the simple and confident statements: "Calvin believed in predestination and denied human freedom." From women seeking ordination from unsympathetic presbyteries come sighs of despair: "We're better off with Paul than Calvin." These are familiar objections to connecting Calvin with freedom.

We heard recently still another objection from a respected reformation historian, Steven Ozment, that Calvin is responsible for the "re-Catholicizing" of Protestant theology at its most sensitive point, the doctrine of justification by faith. . . . Calvin's teaching, like his conduct of the Genevan church, once again made good works and moral behavior the center of religious life and reintroduced religious anxiety over them."<sup>7</sup>

But elsewhere Ozment comments about the later period of the Reformation when Calvin was active, the second generation of the Reformation after Luther when Ozment feels freedom got submerged in discipline: "Scratch a 'new papist' and one may find an old 'freedom fighter.'"<sup>8</sup> He goes on to argue

<sup>3</sup> 1536 *Inst.*, 6 (O.S. I, p. 280).

<sup>4</sup> Quirinius Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism* (Archon Books, 1968, reprint of Grand Rapids, 1931), p. 163.

<sup>5</sup> Ford L. Battles, *A Computerized Concordance to Institutio christianae religionis 1559 of Iohannes Calvinus* (Pittsburgh, 1972), Reel 3, words related to "libertas."

<sup>6</sup> T. H. L. Parker, *John Calvin: A Biography*, esp. pp. 51-53, 79-81, 153-55.

<sup>7</sup> Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven, 1980), pp. 374 and 379.

<sup>8</sup> Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities: The*

that though the initial commitment to freedom tended to be lost in the attempt to create a discipline precisely to protect freedom, the reformers' catechisms and church ordinances retained for a new generation of laity the earlier commitment. "The literature of discipline remained a literature of freedom. If Protestant reformers made laymen bold to resist old superstitions and tyranny, they also gave them the wherewithal to reject in time persisting and new forms of superstition and tyranny."<sup>9</sup>

Though I would not characterize Calvin as a "re-catholicizer" of justification nor as a "new papist," and I hope the reasons will become clear in these lectures, I do agree with Ozment's second point. Calvin was in a fundamental way "an old freedom fighter" who has been able to transmit Luther's commitment to Christian freedom to later generations even though Calvin himself—and his secular and clerical colleagues in Geneva—did not always see as clearly as we do today the implications of that freedom for practical decisions about the lifestyle of the church or the city. For example, our contemporary Reformed commitment to religious freedom has deep roots in Calvin's theology, despite the fact that Calvin's Geneva, like most of sixteenth-century Europe, placed considerable restriction on religious toleration. Therefore I will focus on Calvin's theology rather than on his involvement in the daily life of Geneva.<sup>10</sup> It is his theology of freedom that has proved enduring, giving rise to new generations of "free-

dom fighters" in the following centuries.

Let us return to Calvin's discussion of Christian freedom in the *Institutes*. The introduction we quoted remains essentially the same through the various editions, though in 1559 Calvin adds the clarification that "... freedom is especially an appendage of justification and is of no little avail in understanding its power."<sup>11</sup>

In all the editions Calvin outlines three parts of Christian freedom. The first is "... that the consciences of believers, in seeking assurance of their justification before God, should rise above and advance beyond the law, forgetting all law righteousness ... we should, when justification is being discussed, embrace God's mercy alone, turn our attention from ourselves, and look only to Christ."<sup>12</sup> When the conscience is concerned about standing before God's judgment, it is not the requirements of the law that count, but rather "... Christ alone, who surpasses all perfection of the law, must be set forth as righteousness."<sup>13</sup> This aspect of freedom is related to the classic reformation teaching of salvation by grace alone.

"The second part, dependent on the first, is that consciences observe the law, not as if constrained by the necessity of the law, but that freed from the law's yoke they willingly obey God's will."<sup>14</sup> Here is where Calvin locates the eager, ready, cheerful obedience that Christians gladly offer to God when they realize that their works are no longer measured by the standards of the law. Like children before a merciful father, they know that God will accept even

*Appeal of Protestantism to Sixteenth-Century Germany and Switzerland* (New Haven, 1975), p. 164.

<sup>9</sup> Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, p. 165.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Breen, p. 164.

<sup>11</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 1.

<sup>12</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 2.

<sup>13</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 4.

their incomplete and defective works.<sup>15</sup>

The third part of Christian freedom has to do with outward things which are in themselves "indifferent." "... we are not bound before God by any religious obligation preventing us from sometimes using them and other times not using them, indifferently. And the knowledge of this freedom is very necessary for us, for if it is lacking, our consciences will have no repose and there will be no end to superstitions."<sup>16</sup>

Whereas Calvin seems to assume that the first two parts of Christian freedom will be readily understood by all his readers, since they are so basic to protestant or "evangelical" teaching, he indicates that this third aspect dealing with "indifferent" things, that is things which are neither commanded by God nor forbidden, introduces a "weighty controversy." On the one hand he has in mind the tender in conscience who will begin to doubt whether linen should be used for sheets, shirts, handkerchiefs and napkins, then go on to doubt about courser materials, and finally wonder whether one should simply do without napkins and handkerchiefs. "For all those entangled in such doubts, wherever they turn, see offense of conscience everywhere present."<sup>17</sup> On the other hand Calvin remembers those with far less sensitive consciences who use Christian freedom as an excuse for indulging their lavish tastes in banquets, clothing, and home furnishings. Their greed and boasting defile what might otherwise be indifferent.<sup>18</sup>

Calvin's advice is to learn to be contented in one's own circumstances<sup>19</sup> and

to use things thankfully for the purpose God intended.<sup>20</sup> Calvin believes God intended food and wine to provide "delight and good cheer" as well as nutrition, and clothing to provide comeliness as well as decency.

Has the Lord clothed the flowers with the great beauty that greets our eyes, the sweetness of smell that is wafted upon our nostrils, and yet will it be unlawful for our eyes to be affected by that beauty, or our sense of smell by the sweetness of that odor? ... Did he not endow gold and silver, ivory and marble, with a loveliness that renders them more precious than other metals or stones? Did he not, in short, render many things attractive to us, apart from their necessary use? Away, then, with that inhuman philosophy which, while conceding only a necessary use of creatures, not only malignantly deprives us of the lawful fruit of God's beneficence but cannot be practiced unless it robs a person of all senses and degrades the person to a block.<sup>21</sup>

Still, natural appetites must be controlled and "all show of superfluous wealth" conscientiously avoided by those with ample means; and those with slender means should avoid greedy desires for more than they need. Such moderation is helped by the precept of love which reminds Christians that their possessions are given by God in trust for the needy and must be accounted for. Life should be ordered by the nature of the calling assigned by God as one's "sentry post," the place of service to the world.

Above all "... we should use our

<sup>15</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 5.

<sup>16</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 7.

<sup>18</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 9.

<sup>19</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 8.

<sup>21</sup> *Inst.* III, x, 2-3; cf. *Inst.* III, x, 1-6.

freedom if it results in the edification of our neighbor, but if it does not help our neighbor, then we should forego it."<sup>22</sup> Freedom has been given to make Christians "... more ready for all the duties of love."<sup>23</sup>

After 1543 Calvin adds a note that the Christian's freedom in spiritual things should not be understood to make obedience to government unnecessary. For as Calvin had pointed out since 1536, Christians live in both the spiritual kingdom and the political kingdom with different laws in each.<sup>24</sup> After 1543 the section on conscience has also been expanded considerably.<sup>25</sup>

What is Calvin's source for this way of describing Christian freedom? In substance, first of all Paul, especially in Galatians, then Luther. In the treatise on the *Freedom of a Christian*,<sup>26</sup> Luther sets out the basic insight that Christ has made satisfaction for all sin, leaving the Christians free from all demands of the law. The Christian then in gratitude freely and joyfully offers to serve the neighbor. We also see in Calvin's discussion some echoes of Luther's two kingdoms, though Calvin's are not identical. We notice in Calvin much more stress on the conscience and much more on the problem of "indifferent" things than in Luther. And Calvin's phrasing of the willing obedience as obedience to the law seems to be his characteristic third use of the law—neither for pointing out sin nor for civil order and restraint of evil but as a guide to the Christian who seeks to do the will of God. But we miss the joyful and

exuberant quality of Luther, along with Luther's strong focus on the neighbor as the recipient of the Christian's willing service.

In form or perhaps structure of the three parts of Christian freedom, Calvin is heavily dependent on Melancthon, the German humanist and reformer from the Lutheran tradition. Edward Meylan has shown in detail how Calvin has adapted Melancthon's four stages of Christian freedom from the *Loci communes* for his purposes.<sup>27</sup>

The use of the concept of indifferent things seems to have been nearly universal in the sixteenth-century reformation. Humanists like Calvin, Melancthon, and Zwingli use the Greek term *adiaphora*, while Luther apparently does not. Though both the term and the concept can be traced back through the scholastics and the fathers to the classical world, they never seem to have played so significant a role in Christian theology as in the sixteenth century.<sup>28</sup> The Augsburg Confession and the various Reformed confessions discuss the matter, as we shall see. Typically the reformers speak of ceremonies, holy days, liturgical furnishings, and choice of foods as indifferent things in which the Christian is free, but ethical issues like obedience to civil authorities on particular issues are also often included.

Our dispassionate description of the

<sup>27</sup> Edward F. Meylan, "The Stoic Doctrine of Indifferent Things and the Conception of Christian Liberty in Calvin's *Institutio religionis christianae*," *The Romanic Review* 29 (1937), pp. 135-45. See Melancthon, CR 21, 458-66 (1535 ed.).

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Watson Street, *John Calvin on Adiaphora: An Exposition and Appraisal of His Theory and Practice*, unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1954, pp. 10-63. He says Calvin uses the Greek term rarely, p. 76.

<sup>22</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 12.

<sup>23</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 12.

<sup>24</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 15.

<sup>25</sup> *Inst.* III, xix, 14-16.

<sup>26</sup> Luther, *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*, WA 7, 20-38.

sixteenth-century setting of the discussion of the "indifferent things" hardly conveys the urgency which the issue possessed for Calvin. We should listen to his introduction to a section of the *Institutes* dealing with freedom in relation to ecclesiastical law. The sections on freedom in relation to ecclesiastical power and government, originally part of chapter 6 of the 1536 *Institutes*, were later separated from the section we have just outlined and expanded in Book IV. So we must include this material in our overview of Calvin's concept of freedom.

It has become common usage to call all decrees concerning the worship of God put forward by human persons apart from his Word "human traditions." Our contention is against these, not against holy and useful church institutions which provide for the preservation of discipline or honesty or peace. But the purpose of our effort is to restrain this unlimited and barbarous empire usurped over souls by those who wish to be counted pastors of the church but are actually its most savage butchers. They say the laws they make are "spiritual," pertaining to the soul, and declare them necessary for eternal life. But thus the Kingdom of Christ . . . is invaded; thus the freedom given by him to the consciences of believers is utterly oppressed and cast down . . . necessity ought not to be imposed upon consciences in those matters from which they have been freed by Christ; and unless freed . . . they cannot rest with God. They should acknowledge one King, their deliverer Christ, and should be governed by one law of freedom, the holy Word of the gospel, if they would retain

the grace which they once obtained in Christ. They must be held in no bondage, and bound by no bonds.<sup>29</sup>

Tomorrow in our discussion of order we will have much more to say about civil and ecclesiastical law in relation to freedom.

The only major study of the use of the *adiaphora* in the work of Calvin, that of Thomas Street, surveys the existing literature and reports that most of the scholars who compare the reformers judge Calvin to have a more limited range of indifferent things than Luther.<sup>30</sup> Street himself feels that there is "... not so much difference as has been claimed."<sup>31</sup> "... he [Calvin] is revealed by his doctrine of *adiaphora* as an apostle of liberty to an extent seldom recognized."<sup>32</sup> One unusual ethical matter Calvin includes, he notes, is the practice of usury.<sup>33</sup> But Street feels that Calvin presents no novel position which could claim originality.<sup>34</sup>

This judgment may well be valid if one studies the topics traditionally included among the *adiaphora*, such as ceremonies and liturgical furnishings, the choice of Sunday for public worship, the covering of women's heads. However we will try to show in these lectures that Calvin takes a broader view than others of what should be considered among the *adiaphora* and does thereby make a fresh contribution to the question.

By now it has perhaps become apparent to you that to talk about Christian freedom in Calvin by discussing

<sup>29</sup> *Inst.* IV, x, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Street, p. 87.

<sup>31</sup> Street, p. 325.

<sup>32</sup> Street, p. 320.

<sup>33</sup> Street, p. 167.

<sup>34</sup> Street, p. 323.

chapters of the *Institutes* devoted to it is a bit like walking into a theatre during act two of a play and leaving before the final act. The freedom discussions we have sketched need to be placed into two playscripts which Calvin had in his hands. One is the biblical drama from the standpoint of eternity, the other a contemporary one focused on that segment of the biblical drama in which Calvin himself was a participant.

The one on the grander scale, from the standpoint of eternity, is the drama of creation, sin, redemption, and re-creation. Calvin understands Adam and Eve to have been created with all the dignity of free beings; but they misused their freedom by voluntarily disobeying God and so lost it.<sup>35</sup> Freedom then belongs to the original nature of humanity. But after the fall of the first parents, human beings experienced only a limited and deformed freedom, the freedom to sin.<sup>36</sup> Though God continues to lavish gifts and common graces on fallen humanity: intellect, the knowledge of the sciences, for example, these gifts do not create freedom.<sup>37</sup> But it is God's purpose to redeem and recreate what was so badly deformed. Christ through his willing obedience to God conquered the power of evil and liberated sinners from their bondage. And with the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost, the kingdom of Christ was made manifest already in the midst of the fallen world. Those who are called by the eternal will of God, baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ, and through the Spirit receive the gift of faith also experience the gift of a freedom which is at least partially restored: Christians are

not free from sin, but they are freed by the Spirit to obey God. This restoration or new creation of freedom in the kingdom of Christ, the Christian church, anticipates the final recreation of all things at the end of time.<sup>38</sup> So the church must be reformed according to a biblical vision of this kingdom of freedom. Calvin affirms Augustine's use of Paul's words: "Now where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (II Cor. 3:17).<sup>39</sup> Calvin feels enormous urgency to help Christians of his own day see where they are in this biblical drama, to locate themselves in the kingdom where freedom reigns. He repeatedly uses the image of the Exodus, the liberation of the Jews from Egyptian bondage, to describe the role of Christ, the liberator or vindicator, who frees sinners from miserable bondage in order that they may with ready obedience worship God as "the author of their freedom . . . our heavenly Vindicator, having liberated us by the power of his arm, leads us into the kingdom of freedom."<sup>40</sup>

Calvin's belief about the critical importance of the teaching of freedom is related also to the second playscript Calvin has in hand, one focused on the history of his own time in which he sees himself in relation to his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, especially the late medieval and renaissance theologians.

On the one hand, he is clearly indebted to the franciscan or occamistic vision of the freedom of God. The will of God alone creates law; outside the

<sup>38</sup> *Inst.* II, ii, 20; *Inst.* II, iii, 6-8; *Inst.* III, iii, 9-10.

<sup>39</sup> *Inst.* II, ii, 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Inst.* II, viii, 15. Cf. *Inst.* II, xi, 9; *Inst.* II, xvi, 2; *Inst.* III, ii, 1; *Inst.* III, iii, 1; *Inst.* IV, x, 21 and 23; Comm. Isa., C.O. 37, 93-94.

<sup>35</sup> Comm. Gen., C.O. 23, 39, 54-56, 61, 64.

<sup>36</sup> *Inst.* II, ii, 5-8; *Inst.* II, iii, 5.

<sup>37</sup> *Inst.* II, ii, 13-16.

will of God everything is contingent. No necessity can be placed on it.<sup>41</sup> Listen to Calvin's reply to those who complain about the way God has changed in his dealings with humanity from the Old Testament to the New, through various times in the history of humanity. Why, they ask, could God not have been simpler and more consistent in his plan of redemption?

This is as if they were to quarrel with God because he created the world so late . . . or because he willed to alternate winter and summer, day and night. But let us not doubt that God has done everything wisely and justly . . . even if we often do not know the reason. . . . Who . . . will say it is not meet that God should have in his own hand and will the free disposing of his graces, and should illuminate such nations as he wills? To evoke the preaching of his Word at such places as he wills? To give progress and success to his doctrine in such way and measure as he wills? To deprive the world, because of its ungratefulness, of the knowledge of his name for such ages as he will, and according to his mercy to restore it when he again wills?<sup>42</sup>

Calvin certainly echoes the occamistic stress on the freedom of the will of God here and elsewhere.<sup>43</sup>

What is the context in which we should read Calvin's explanation? Passerin d'Entrèves in his discussion of the

<sup>41</sup> See Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), chaps. 2 and 4.

<sup>42</sup> *Inst.* II, xi, 14.

<sup>43</sup> *Inst.* I, v, 8-9; *Inst.* I, xiv, 1 and 3; *Inst.* I, xv, 8; *Inst.* I, xvi, 3; *Inst.* I, xvii, 1 and 10-12; *Inst.* I, xviii, 4; *Inst.* II, v, 5; *Inst.* III, xxi, 1; *Inst.* III, xxiii, 5; C.O. 34, 339-43.

history of legal philosophy has pointed out that two different changes took place in the world in which Calvin's thought took shape. First, the idea of sovereignty comes into a new focus in the sixteenth century in the secular realm as well as the theological one. Bodin deserves much credit for it. "... all law must go back to an ultimate power which expresses and sanctions it. The holder of that power is the source of the law. He is therefore above the law. . . ."<sup>44</sup> The concern for sovereignty, for positive law, goes back to the recovery of Roman law in the eleventh century and proved very controversial in the generations which followed. One consequence of this idea appeared to be the undermining of the possibility of natural law, though in fact ways were found to permit the two understandings of law to coexist.

The second development, which also seemed to be a threat to the idea of natural law, was the late medieval voluntarism of Scotus and Occam. D'Entrèves sees this development as the extension of the idea of sovereignty to the arena of moral law. The definition of the good is to be found in the fact that God wills it. Natural law is no longer the bridge between God and humanity, and it provides no indication of the existence of an eternal and immutable order.<sup>45</sup>

Surely we should see the late medieval uneasiness about earlier views of natural law as the context for Calvin's

<sup>44</sup> A. Passerin d'Entrèves, *Natural Law: An Introduction to Legal Philosophy* (London, 1967), p. 66.

<sup>45</sup> d'Entrèves, p. 69. Cited by David Little, *Religion, Order, and Law: A Study in Pre-Revolutionary England* (N.Y., 1969), p. 41 n. 43. Though Little builds strongly on the voluntarist element in Calvin's thought, he sees little reason to connect that with nominalism.

choice not to build a stronger and more consistent case for the authority of the order of nature for human conduct.

One striking example of the occamistic spirit in Calvin in his discussion of Deut. 8:1-4: a person does not live by bread alone but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. Calvin denies that this passage has to do with the life of the soul only. He points out that though we are accustomed to being nourished by bread and wine, and we observe that a person weak with hunger is revived by eating familiar foods, Moses is telling us that the bread and wine have no power in themselves. They are dead creatures which cannot impart life.

It is true that the bread will indeed be a means of refreshing a person, and God wishes to make use of it. But is it necessary for us to attach our lives to bread and wine? Not at all. But it is necessary to see that God has constituted this order in nature, but it is not to detract from his praise nor to despoil him of his right. But rather if he wishes to deploy his power by means of his creatures, it is to show that he has them all in his hand, and that he is able to dispose of them according to his good will.<sup>46</sup>

Unlike a human father who has only bread with which to nourish his children, God could use other means. God's power is not shut up in the things he has made. He nourished the Jews in the wilderness with manna, and he could use other means.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Serm. Deut., C.O. 26, 596. Cf. Comm. Gen., C.O. 23, 20 concerning God's use of the sun and moon.

<sup>47</sup> Serm. Deut., C.O. 26, 597; cf. 593-97. Passage noted by Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Edinburgh, 1959), p. 147 n. 2, but

Here we see the occamistic spirit which insists that what appear to be laws of nature, cause and effect, are in fact merely the order which God has chosen; God could have created a quite different order. Though in fact God normally governs the world according to these chosen means so that the order of nature appears to us to be reliable, God can choose to break through this order in miraculous fashion.<sup>48</sup>

Calvin in preaching on John the Baptist's claim that God can raise up children of Abraham even from stones (Lk. 3:8) extends this view of the contingency of the material order to that of the spiritual order of the church. Calvin grants that those he calls the "papists" are right in claiming that Jesus has promised never to abandon his church. But they are wrong in presuming that God needs them to be the Church.

But when they take for the second article, . . . , we are descended since the apostles by a continual succession . . . so that it is necessary that God declare himself here, and that he live in the midst of us. . . . When then the Papists wish to enclose the Church in their den of thieves . . . they abuse themselves too heavily. . . . St. John says that God will work so that he will conserve his Church, not at all at the appetite of human beings and according to their imaginations but by his high and incomprehensible power. . . .<sup>49</sup>

"God in maintaining his Church is not

Wallace sees in it only a parallel to the Lord's Supper. Cf. Comm. Ezek., C.O. 40, 116; cited by Milner, p. 18.

<sup>48</sup> Oberman, *Harvest of Medieval Theology*, chaps. 2 and 4.

<sup>49</sup> Serm. Harm. evang., C.O. 46, 541.

subject to any natural order, but he works there in a strange fashion."<sup>50</sup> In a miraculous way out of natural confusion God creates the church as though he made human beings out of stones, and even more than human beings—companions of the angels, inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.<sup>51</sup> Calvin clearly affirms that the promises of God are reliable, that God will maintain his Church in the world; but he finds it presumptuous to imagine that God is bound by a particular order for the Church.

Even discussing infant baptism Calvin points out that

... when the apostle makes hearing the beginning of faith he is describing only the ordinary arrangement and dispensation of the Lord which he commonly uses in calling his people—not, indeed, prescribing for him an unvarying rule so that he may use no other way.<sup>52</sup>

However much Calvin may be indebted to the occamists for his great stress on the freedom of God, Calvin is deeply opposed to the way these same occamistic theologians deal with both the questions of freedom we have raised in regard to people. Perhaps more than any theologians in history they exalt natural human freedom, claiming that natural humanity since the fall, without any special aid of grace, can love God with a perfectly unselfish love above all things. Furthermore a person must produce such love, since it is within human capacities, before God will grant grace. The burden of such high expecta-

tations in fact produced in the late middle ages a religiousness pervaded by anxiety and scrupulosity.<sup>53</sup> It is over against that pastoral problem that Calvin, like Luther and the first generation of reformers, insists on justification by grace alone, a doctrine that all the reformers found more biblical than that of their predecessors. It is also in this context that we can understand why these reformers all thought the doctrine of predestination accorded well with Christian freedom. If the choice of the elect is in the will of God alone, the Christian who is aware of the gift of faith within can rejoice that the Spirit is at work and feel liberated from anxiety and fear concerning eternal life.<sup>54</sup> As Calvin puts it:

... it makes a great difference whether you teach forgiveness of sins as deserved by just and full contrition, which the sinner can never perform; or whether you enjoin the sinner to hunger and thirst after God's mercy to show the sinner—through a recognition of misery, vacillation, weariness and captivity—where the person should seek refreshment, rest, and freedom; finally to teach the sinner in humility to give glory to God.<sup>55</sup>

Our second question, that of Christian freedom, seemed to Calvin totally neglected by the Catholic church of his day. For the late medieval Catholic in the heyday of occamistic theology, even after justification, that is being restored after sin to a state of grace through the sacraments, there could be no genuine

<sup>50</sup> Serm. Harm. evang., C.O. 46, 541. Passage noted by Wallace in another context, p. 143 n. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Serm. Harm. evang., C.O. 46, 542.

<sup>52</sup> *Inst.* IV, xvi, 19.

<sup>53</sup> Oberman, chaps. 6 and 7; E. Jane Dempsey Douglass, *Justification in Late Medieval Preaching: A Study of John Geiler of Keisersberg* (Leiden, 1966), chaps. 5 and 6.

<sup>54</sup> *Inst.* III, xxi, 1; *Inst.* III, xxiv, 6.

<sup>55</sup> *Inst.* III, iv, 3.

confidence. There was first of all the anxiety that perhaps not all mortal sins had been confessed, or that inadequate contrition had been produced to be able to receive forgiveness for those confessed. A culture preoccupied with the awareness of impending death served as constant reminder that salvation depended on dying in a state of grace. Confession for all mortal sins must be made to a priest, and the works of satisfaction enjoined by the priest must be accomplished to avoid purgatory. Only the few rare persons who had received special revelation of their salvation could be certain of their eternal destination. Church regulations made entirely by the clergy, such as those concerning the foods that could be eaten during periods of obligatory fasting and concerning the many days on which one must attend mass, and the requirement of clerical celibacy for all priests seemed very burdensome to many. Every forgiven Christian was sooner or later a sinner again, struggling with the need to produce without any special help of grace a totally unselfish love for God and full contrition in order to receive forgiveness.

Whereas in the context of justification Calvin feels that it is grace which should be held up to the sinner, not human freedom, in the context of the Christian life Calvin believes it is precisely Christian freedom which should be announced to ease problems of doubt, anxiety, and scrupulosity. Christ's liberating work should free the Christian from a troubled conscience, from fear, from timorous obedience to ungodly laws, and empower the believer by the Spirit to stand courageously against evil.

Though older scholarship often seemed to set the worlds of late scholasticism and renaissance humanism over

against one another, recent research increasingly sees parallels and interconnections. William Bouwsma points to emphases in humanism similar to those we saw in occamistic theology on the free and mysterious will of God and on the pursuit of moral perfection, but also a deepening of the sense of sin and pessimism about the human condition. He concludes:

Renaissance humanism remained, in Luther's sense, Pelagian. The consequence was, however, that Renaissance culture in Italy, like scholastic theology in the north, helped to intensify, from both directions at once, the unbearable tension between the moral obligations and the moral capacities of the Christian that could at last find relief only in either a repudiation of Renaissance attitudes or the theology of the Reformation.<sup>56</sup>

Calvin chose Reformation theology rather than repudiation of a number of emphases in renaissance thought pointed out by Bouwsma as parallels to the reformation. One of these is the liberation of human order from the metaphysical domain so that it could be dealt with as a practical issue on a "human scale."<sup>57</sup> Another is the positive focus on the human will in the context of Christian freedom, after the liberation by Christ from sin. Both Bouwsma and David Willis point out the parallels between Calvin and humanism in relation to the love of rhetoric and the role of preaching and singing in stirring the emotions

<sup>56</sup> William J. Bouwsma, "Renaissance and Reformation: An Essay in their Affinities and Connections," in *Luther and the Dawn of the Modern Era*, ed. Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden, 1974), pp. 127-49, esp. pp. 139-40.

<sup>57</sup> Bouwsma, pp. 132-34.

and moving the will. God is seen as a rhetor who uses persuasion rather than coercion with the people of God, accommodating his Word to their capacities of understanding.<sup>58</sup> Such a style seems appropriate to a free people.

We see then that Calvin to some extent rejects, to some extent adapts the scholastic and renaissance theological traditions concerning freedom in his search for resources for envisioning a new style of Christian life where Christian freedom could flourish. He could also from the very beginning of his own ministry draw upon a little more than a decade of experimentation in Protestant communities like Wittenberg, Zurich, and Strasbourg. Communication among the Protestant communities was lively: books were published, visits exchanged, and letters written. Calvin also had very personal experience of the younger Protestant churches of France. And of course all Protestants retained to some degree the style of Christian living to which they had previously been accustomed. But out of all these elements and the study of Scriptures, Calvin had to help Geneva to create a new

Christian lifestyle to express the freedom it professed. When Calvin arrived in Geneva just after the city had declared itself for the reformation, Calvin recalls on his deathbed,

There was preaching and that was all. They would look out for idols, it is true, and burn them. But there was no reformation; everything was in disorder. There was, of course, the good man, Maistre Guillaume, and then blind Courauld. And besides them there was Maistre Antoine Saunier and that fine preacher Froment, who laid aside his apron and got up in the pulpit, then went back to his shop, where he chattered, and thus gave a double sermon.<sup>59</sup>

For Calvin a reformation requires more than preaching; it needs order. So we will be looking at Calvin's view of order tomorrow.

My plan for the series of lectures is to take up each of the three aspects of Christian freedom which Calvin uses as the structure for his discussion. This evening we have given some attention to the first aspect, seeking assurance for justification in Christ's work rather than our own. Surely this is the most often discussed of the three, and probably the best understood.

Tomorrow we will begin four lectures on the aspect of freedom related to outward things which are in themselves "indifferent." The foundation which we must lay for that discussion is an understanding of freedom in relation to order. Then we will take one of the examples Calvin gives of "indifferent" matters, the question of women's silence in the church, and explore it in some depth.

<sup>58</sup> Bouwsma, p. 135. Cf. E. David Willis, "Rhetoric and Responsibility in Calvin's Theology," in *The Context of Contemporary Theology*, ed. Willis and Alexander J. McKelway (Atlanta, 1974), pp. 43-63. Cf. Bouwsma, "The Two Faces of Humanism, Stoicism, and Augustinianism in Renaissance Thought" in *Itinerarium italicum: The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations*, ed. Heiko A. Oberman with Thomas A. Brady, Jr. (Leiden, 1975), pp. 3-60, esp. pp. 38-39. Cf. Quirinius Breen, "St. Thomas and Calvin as Theologians: A Comparison" in *The Heritage of John Calvin*, ed. John H. Bratt (Grand Rapids, 1973), pp. 23-39. Some reservations to emphasizing the importance of renaissance rhetoric with relation to reformation preaching are expressed by Bengt Haeggglund, "Renaissance and Reformation," in *Luther and the Dawn of the Modern Era*, ed. Oberman, pp. 150-57, esp. p. 155.

<sup>59</sup> Parker, p. 153.

I have chosen this example for several reasons. First, it has gone strangely unnoticed in the literature. For centuries Reformed churches have assumed Calvin understood women's silence in church, a symbol of forbidding of public office in the church to women, to be a matter of divine law because it is taught in Scripture; and some Reformed churches still believe that. I had read the *Institutes* many times myself before I noticed that Calvin had included women's silence along with the covering of women's heads, a regularly used example of "indifferent" things in the sixteenth century. It is perfectly logical that the two should be treated together as pieces of apostolic advice recorded in the Scriptures concerning proper decorum. But clearly there was then and has continued to be a different level of emotional investment in the two pieces of advice. To the best of my present knowledge, Calvin is the only sixteenth-century theologian who views women's silence in church as an "indifferent" matter, i.e., one determined by human rather than by divine law.

In a discussion of church order as a matter of human governance Calvin asks:

Is religion placed in a woman's shawl, so that it is sinful for her to go out with a bare head? Is that decree of Paul's concerning silence [i.e., in church] so holy that it cannot be violated without the greatest wickedness? . . . Not at all. For if a woman needs such haste to help a neighbor that she cannot stop to cover her head, she commits no fault if she runs to her with head uncovered. And there is a place where it is no less proper for her to speak than elsewhere to remain silent.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> *Inst.* IV, x, 31.

It is important for perspective to have some sense of how Protestant confessions of the sixteenth century deal with the question of freedom with respect to Paul's advice concerning women's proper roles.

We should point out that most of the Protestant confessions of the time discuss what is called "human tradition." When this term refers, as it usually does, to ecclesiastical laws seen to be without warrant in Scripture or which are perceived to be contrary to Scripture and which have been made binding upon the consciences of Christians, laws such as those concerning celibacy or fast days, they are regularly declared by the Protestant confessions to be useless and ungodly.<sup>61</sup> On the other hand, usually approval is given to rites which are useful to the peace, unity, and good order of the church without being considered binding on the conscience, as we have heard Calvin explain.<sup>62</sup>

In three confessions, all of them very early chronologically, the advice of Paul concerning conduct in church, such as women covering their heads, is referred to as an example of salutary and useful tradition, but still not binding so as to be necessary to salvation or an occasion for sin unless others were offended. Examples are the Augsburg Confession of the Lutherans of 1530, written by Melancthon, Tetrapolitan Confession of Bucer of 1530, and the Geneva Confession of 1536, possibly written by Farel

<sup>61</sup> See Augsburg Confession I. xv; II. v (art. xxvi); II. vii (art. xxviii); Tetrapolitan Confession, 1530, XIV; Geneva Confession, 1536, XVII; French Confession, 1559, XXXIII; II Helvetic Confession, 1566, XXVII; Belgic Confession, 1561, XXXII.

<sup>62</sup> See Augsburg Conf. I. xv; II. v (art. xxvi); II. vii (art. xxviii); Tetrapolitan Conf. XIV; Geneva Conf., 1536, XVII; French Conf., 1559, XXXIII; II Helvetic Conf. XXVII; Belgic Conf., 1561, XXXII.

and edited by Calvin. The Augsburg and Tetrapolitan Confessions explicitly mention the question of women covering their heads; the Geneva one does not. None of the three specifically mentions women's silence in the church. Calvin certainly knew both the Augsburg Confession and the Tetrapolitan Confession during his years in Strasbourg and probably before going to Geneva, and he publicly expressed his approval of the Augsburg Confession.<sup>63</sup> So he would have felt himself in the mainstream of Protestant thought in his general treatment of Paul's advice as not binding on the conscience. The Tetrapolitan Confession alone also includes the idea the traditions could be updated to changing circumstances:

Many such the Church even today justly observes, and according to occasion frames anew, which he who rejects despises the authority, not of men, but of God, whose tradition whatsoever is profitable.<sup>64</sup>

Melanchthon's *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* of 1531 seems to have no specific reference to women covering their heads or keeping silence.

The authors of the only two scholarly articles I have found<sup>65</sup> which notice

<sup>63</sup> W. Nijenhuis, "Calvin and the Augsburg Confession," in *Ecclesia Reformata: Studies on the Reformation* (Leiden, 1972), pp. 97-114.

<sup>64</sup> See Augsburg Conf. II. vii (art. xxviii); Geneva Conf. XVII; Tetrapolitan Conf. XIV, trans. A. Cochrane, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th Century* (Phila., 1966), p. 72. The Geneva Confession statement is less similar to Calvin's view than the other two. For authorship see Cochrane, p. 119.

<sup>65</sup> Willis P. DeBoer, "Calvin on the Role of Women," in *Exploring the Heritage of John Calvin*, ed. David E. Holwerda (Grand Rapids, 1976), pp. 236-72; John H. Bratt, "The Role and Status of Women in the Writings of John Calvin," in *Renaissance, Reformation, Resurgence*, ed. Peter DeKlerk (Grand Rapids, 1976), pp. 1-17.

the fact that Calvin considers women's silence a matter of order seem to find it very hard to imagine that Calvin might have made the point deliberately. So I have been searching for any possible evidence as to whether or not Calvin's statement was intentional.

Second, this example of the use of "indifferent" things is one which can help people in the 1980's to understand the feelings surrounding this debate in Calvin's day. It is very difficult to find an intense theological debate today about candles on the altar or the eating of eggs and butter during Lent. But in the sixteenth-century setting these were issues about which people genuinely cared and about which serious debate took place. It took a great deal of teaching, reflection, and personal adjustment before people could regard them as "indifferent" from the standpoint of conscience. Today we still hear serious theological arguments raised in some circles about the propriety of women in public office in the church and so can perhaps better understand the process by which the reformation struggled with these questions of piety.

Third, we regularly hear discussions of what Calvin learned from Luther or Melanchthon, but we never ask what Calvin might have learned from women. This example offers us that rare opportunity. Do you remember that shopkeeper-preacher, Froment, of whom Calvin spoke so warmly on his deathbed? We will need to look at the books his wife, Marie Dentièrre, published in Geneva, one the first history of the Genevan reformation, the other a polemical document, including a "Defense for Women."<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Louis Dufour, "Restitution de l'écrit intitulé: La Guerre et deslivrance de la ville de Genesve (1536)," *Mémoires et documents publiés*

The final lecture will take up that aspect of Christian freedom which includes willing service or obedience to God. When I compared the *Institutes* passage explaining this aspect with Luther, I commented that there Calvin speaks much less about the neighbor who receives that service. In fact elsewhere Calvin has much to say about mutual responsibility and human solidarity. So I will focus on that aspect of Calvin's view of willing obedience, obedience to the second table of the law. Calvin's teaching on freedom is sometimes clearly intended as consolation to those who are suffering in conscience, but it always seems to be intended to

strengthen the hands of those who are called to do God's work in the world. We will discuss in a later lecture the strong connection between freedom and courage or boldness in Calvin's thought.

So Christian freedom as Calvin sees it is rooted in the freedom of God, expressed in God's will to recreate humanity through the work of Christ in the incarnation. Christ the liberator has freed fallen humanity from bondage to sin and from bondage to tyrannical human institutions which usurp God's sovereignty. Such a great gift, Calvin thinks, should be taught enthusiastically to the people of God.

The significance of Christian freedom is its existence within restored humanity as a sign of the presence of Christ's kingdom already alive in the midst of a fallen world. Christian freedom is the beginning of the enjoyment of a freedom which will characterize the new creation at the end of time.

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*par la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Genève*, XX (1879-1888), pp. 309-384; "Epistre très utile faicte & composée par une femme Chrestienne de Tornay ..." in A.-L. Herminjard, ed., *Correspondance des réformateurs dans les pays de langue française* (Geneva, 1874), V, pp. 295-304.

# The Reader's Digest Bible: An Interview

by BRUCE M. METZGER  
with RONALD C. WHITE, JR.

*Bruce M. Metzger is George L. Collard Professor of New Testament Language and Literature at Princeton Theological Seminary. A world renowned Biblical scholar, he has recently become known to an even larger audience as the Editor of the newly published Reader's Digest Bible. Discussion about the Reader's Digest Bible is heard in many places. Many readers of the Bulletin would like to ask Dr. Metzger some of the questions that they themselves are being asked. Rather than ask Dr. Metzger to write an article about the Reader's Digest Bible and his role as editor, a more appropriate format was an interview.*

EDITOR: What is the aim of the Reader's Digest Bible?

METZGER: The aim of this edition of the Bible is to offer the reader a shortened form of the Revised Standard Version which, though condensed, retains the essentials of the broad scope of the Bible as well as the ring in phraseology and "sound" of the Scriptures.

EDITOR: What were the guidelines for the project?

METZGER: At the outset of the four years of work that I put into the project, I drew up lists of passages in the Bible that are repetitious or have reduced relevance for present-day readers. For example, Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 are virtually identical, and in Numbers 7 the same account is repeated twelve times. The genealogies in Genesis, I Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, as well as most of the dietary laws in Leviticus, were deemed expendable in a condensed edition of the Bible.

Secondly, I drew up a list of other passages that were not to be modified in any way, not even by the elimination of a single word. This list included such passages as the Ten Commandments, Psalm 23, the Beatitudes of Matthew 5, the Lord's Prayer, John 3:16, I Corinthians 13, and many others. I went

through earlier series of the International Sunday School Lesson series and selected verses that had frequently been specified as "Golden Texts." These remain without alteration.

Thirdly, I insisted that when a transitional sentence was formed in order to link together the two parts remaining after a block-cut had been excised, no word should be used that does not occur in the Revised Standard Version.

The editors at Pleasantville, NY, skilled in their special technique of condensation, went through the R.S.V. text line by line (except the passages in the second list) and carefully excised a few words here and there. For example, "He answered and said" was usually reduced to "He answered." In John 4:14 the second instance in that verse of the phrase "the water that I shall give him" is replaced by "it."

At the conclusion of this detailed work of condensation, done under the supervision of John E. Walsh,<sup>1</sup> a typescript of each book of the Bible was submitted to me for examination and

<sup>1</sup> Walsh, a senior editor at Reader's Digest, has published books on the Wright Brothers, John Paul Jones, the shroud of Turin, and the bones of St. Peter.

approval. Sometimes I would make further suggestions, either by way of restoring deleted material or making additional deletions. In every instance of serious disagreement, the office at Pleasantville deferred to my opinion.

Finally, I wrote brief introductions for each book of the Bible, as well as general introductions for the Old Testament and the New Testament.

EDITOR: What proportion of the Bible is retained?

METZGER: The Reader's Digest condensation retains about sixty percent of the entire Bible. Unlike some other shortened editions of the Scriptures, none of the sixty-six books has been omitted.

EDITOR: How does the condensation affect the New Testament versus the Old Testament?

METZGER: The sixty percent just mentioned results from retaining about one half of the Old Testament and about three-fourths of the New Testament.

EDITOR: What about the words of Jesus? Have any of these been deleted?

METZGER: As you know, frequently the three Synoptic Gospels report the same incident or teaching, in much the same words. In some cases—but not all—one or more of these twofold or threefold repetitions have been deleted (an exception was made for the miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, which, because it seems to be integral to the structure of each of the Gospels, has been kept in all four accounts). Of course, in eliminating one or another of the many repetitions among the Gospels, the words of Jesus contained in them were necessarily deleted also. Certain other words of Jesus, considered not essential to the meaning, were likewise omitted.

EDITOR: Which audience do you anticipate this edition will reach?

METZGER: It is my hope that those who never read the Bible because they imagine it to be too long and complicated will begin with this condensation, and then go on to read the entire Bible. Furthermore, children and young people may find it useful as the first stage in becoming acquainted with the treasures of the Scriptures. Likewise, the college student who wants to take a course on, say, Milton, but is told that only those who have some knowledge of the Bible should enroll, may find this edition less formidable than the complete Bible.

EDITOR: I notice that neither chapter nor verse numbers appear in this edition. Why is that so?

METZGER: This condensation of the Bible is not intended to be a study edition, with which reference books and concordances need to be co-ordinated, but a reading Bible that presents no intrusive numerals which, even when printed in smaller type, often interrupt the smooth reading of the text. In lacking these numerals, the Reader's Digest edition resembles the earliest manuscripts of the Hebrew and Greek originals, which, of course, had no chapter and verse divisions.

The chapter numbers that we find in most English Bibles date from the end of the twelfth century and are the work of Stephen Langton, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury. The verse numbers are still more recent; they appear first in the Geneva Bible of 1560.

In order to assist readers to locate passages in the condensation, the editors at Pleasantville have drawn up an extensive index of persons, places, in-

cidents, and teachings in the Bible. Since these are keyed to the text by page, a reader who might not know where to find, say, the book of Judges for the account of Samson and Delilah, will welcome this handy index. Furthermore, even readers who are well-read in the Scriptures will appreciate such entries as "heaven," "hell," "Holy Spirit," "hope," "humility" (to select only five topics out of two columns of entries under the letter *h*).

EDITOR: I know that our readers have been dealing with reactions to the Reader's Digest Bible in their own locations of ministry. Some persons have related to me either their own questions about this project or the criticisms of members of their congregations. How do you answer the charge that you have produced a version that distorts the holy Word of God?

METZGER: In the work of condensing the Bible, every effort was made to be thoroughly objective, without bias toward or against any particular set of beliefs. The brief introductions to the several books of the Bible attempt to set forth, in non-technical language, a summary of present-day scholarly opinion about the date, authorship, and composition of a given book. Whenever feasible, I tried also to show the influence of an Old Testament book upon the New Testament.

More than once people have quoted to me the passage in Revelation (22:18-19), with its solemn warning against adding to or taking away from "the words of the book of this prophecy." These words, however, really amount to an ancient copyright notice. Such warnings were not unusual when manuscripts were copied by hand and the basic text could be easily altered. Eu-

sebius, the early Church historian, tells us in his *Ecclesiastical History* (V.20) that Bishop Irenaeus of Lyons in Gaul (A.D. 180) placed a similar warning at the close of his treatise *On the Ogdoad*, which he considered especially liable to suffer intentional corruption by scribes. In both cases the warning means that scribes should beware of adding material to or dropping material from the copy that is being made, and then claiming that it is a true and faithful copy. Neither Kenneth Taylor's paraphrase, *The Living Bible*, which adds explanatory words to the text, nor the Reader's Digest condensation, which drops some passages, comes under the warning of Rev. 22:18-19—for neither of them pretends to give verbatim the Book of Revelation.

People who quote Rev. 22:18-19 against condensing the Bible are not consistent, for they would never think of applying this passage as a warning (a) against using a pocket edition of the New Testament and Psalms (which, of course, lacks thirty-eight books of the Old Testament), or (b) against a minister who makes a selection of certain verses from a chapter of the Bible to read as the Scripture lesson before the sermon, or (c) against Scripture portions or children's Bible story books.

EDITOR: Your work as editor has thrust you into the limelight, beyond the esteem in which you are held by biblical scholars, ministers, and students. Could you share with us anything from the early response to the Reader's Digest Bible that has either saddened or encouraged you?

METZGER: I can't say that I have been especially saddened by any particular response. Some people are against the condensed Bible because they regard the Reader's Digest Association as a re-

actionary, right-wing organization. Others are against the edition because they imagine that the intention is to do away with the complete Bible and to replace it with a "mini-Bible." Actually the intention is precisely the opposite: to persuade people who have never opened the Bible to begin reading a shorter edition, and then to go on to the complete Bible.

It was to be expected that, at the publication of the condensed Bible (September 28, 1982), I would begin to receive a considerable amount of mail—some of it praising the edition, and a greater amount condemning it. Let me share sections of two letters that I received.

The first, an anonymous letter postmarked Brooklyn, NY, begins: "This is from a Christian who is so cut up over what you and your so-called friends have done by rewriting the Bible. . . . May you and your family be cast into the pit of hell. You bitch of all bitches, who gave you the write [sic!] to do this? You shall die early for what you did. . . ." After much more in a similar vein on both sides of a large sheet, the letter closes by drawing attention to the "curse powder" that the writer was enclosing in the envelope. (When I opened the letter something sifted out that I took to be unscented talcum powder.)

The other letter, written by a woman who is living in a retirement home in a suburb of Philadelphia, begins: "When I heard that the Reader's Digest was putting out a condensation of the Bible, I was shocked, having read Rev. 22:18. So I did not order the book. However,

through an error I received the Bible and intended to return the package unopened. On second thought, and knowing that I had a week to look it over before returning it, I opened the package—and I LIKE IT. . . . I have read Hebrews and Romans, two books hard for me. I will keep my R. D. Bible and use it. Again many thanks" (signed).

EDITOR: Do you have any final advice for those of us who wish to help people understand the place of the Reader's Digest Bible?

METZGER: The first thing I should like to say is that more than a dozen shorter or abridged Bibles have been produced thus far this century. In comparison with these, I think that the special techniques of condensation developed by the Reader's Digest editors have produced a superior shortened version of the Scriptures. Of course, it is not intended that any of these editions should take the place of the complete Bible. For study purposes an annotated reference Bible is useful.

The Reader's Digest Bible, on the other hand, is designed for rapid and easy reading. It is intended especially for someone who previously had been daunted by the sheer length and presumed complexity of the entire Bible, comprising about fourteen hundred double-column pages. This edition of nearly eight hundred pages, printed like an ordinary book, invites the reader to begin to savor the treasures of Biblical narrative and teaching. From that stage, the reader can go on to the complete Bible.

# The Word, the Media, and the Marketplace

by DANIEL JENKINS

*A native of Merthyr Tyfil, Wales, Professor Jenkins is an alumnus of the University of Edinburgh and Knox College, Toronto. A former minister of the Regent Square United Reformed Church in London, he is currently Frederick and Margaret L. Weyerhaeuser Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. Dr. Jenkins has been a member of the Central Religious Advisory Committee for British Broadcasting. He is also the author of fourteen books, the most recent of which is Christian Maturity and Christian Success.*

(Based on lectures given at the Center of Continuing Education, Princeton Theological Seminary, in January, 1983.)

CHRISTIAN faith has a special interest in communication because it is concerned with the restoration of a broken relationship between God and humankind and between people and each other. Communion is impossible without communication. God speaks in the Word, the most personal form of address, which creates an intense Christian preoccupation with language. Language presupposes a community and therefore the possibility of communion, yet it is also through language that the depth of our estrangement from God and from each other becomes most manifest. George Steiner's remarkable book *After Babel*<sup>1</sup> brings out both the almost miraculous nature of language as a means of communication and its divisive character. Human beings of all kinds are of the same species, yet they have produced a vast multiplicity of languages.

Christian language is unique because, at the same time, it makes possible the restoration of human communication at the most fundamental level, as typified by Pentecost, and also reveals how obstinate the obstacles to

this communication are. Jesus was massively misunderstood by his own people and even by his chosen apostles. Christian proclamation becomes authentic only through the struggle to find living words, even within the circle of faith itself. Otherwise the good news quickly sounds like stale news. The language of Zion itself can degenerate into the jargon of an in-group. Part of the critical task of theology is "to purify the dialect of the tribe." The sacraments testify that the Word can express itself in action as well as in words, as it can in music, the visual arts, and other forms of communication; but the Bible makes clear why the spoken word has to have priority.

Inadequate attention has been given to the relation between language and sanctification. Growth in grace means growth in the quality of our relationship with God and with each other. This means improvement also in the quality of our communication and therefore of our language. Of course, actions frequently speak louder than words and what we do is more important than what we say; but Christians should understand that responsible speech is itself a form of action and that

<sup>1</sup> Oxford University Press, 1975.

its quality should help determine and be determined by the nature of our other actions. A "Christian walk and conversation" should become increasingly full of grace, grace-ful in both senses of that word.

More than that, the larger Christian communities become, the more essential it is both that their understanding of Christian faith deepens and that their ability to express that faith adequately improves. When this does not happen, churches either begin to evaporate in clouds or, more dangerously, they become purveyors of religious lies, promoting and exploiting inauthentic experience. "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds." This is how the voice of a church loses authority, even though it may continue for a time to enjoy popular success. Christian language has to be a public language. It is difficult to maintain its freshness and vitality when it is much bandied about.

Because large-scale Christian communication is always peculiarly difficult, it is not surprising that it should have problems today. The novelty of these problems is often exaggerated, even in so valuable a book as Hendrik Kraemer's *Communication of the Christian Faith*.<sup>2</sup> Some problems, of course, are unique to our time, and these will be our main preoccupation; and there are others which are intensifications of those which have long existed. But problems there always have been, along with resources to overcome them.

Our modern difficulties which create the problems have frequently been rehearsed and need only brief mention here. With the break-up of traditional societies, many people cease to share common assumptions and lose a com-

mon universe of discourse, except over relative trivialities. The variety of options concerning philosophies and styles of life creates bewilderment and confusion rather than a clearcut pluralism. People's values become their private possession rather than means by which they identify themselves with a wider community. The weight attached to external authority diminishes and the support for beliefs provided by institutions, whether they be states, churches, schools, or families, is weakened. All this is true, but what has received less attention is the impact on people in this situation of the large-scale media of communication. The most obvious of these are television and radio, coming directly into our homes. The fact that printing has been with us for a long time makes us often overlook the fact that the great increase in the amount of printed material and of information it conveys also represents an important development as compared with centuries previous to our own. And we are still only on the threshold of understanding all that may be involved in electronic methods of storing and reproducing knowledge through the use of computers.

On the surface, all this should be welcomed by Christians, since it could serve to make communication easier and more accurate. The trouble is that faith also reminds us that Satan is an effective and articulate communicator. The richer the opportunities for communication, the greater the possibilities for their abuse. The question I want to raise is whether sufficient attention has yet been paid to the dangers to true Christian communication inherent in the expansion of media of communication.

What are some of these dangers? First, the sheer volume of material created by

<sup>2</sup> Westminster Press, 1956.

this expansion can overwhelm us. Coping with the Sunday *New York Times* can easily crowd out the Word of God on the Lord's Day, and watching television can become a substitute for having a life of one's own. And quite apart from the mounting tide of rubbish, so much valuable knowledge is available that no individual can assimilate more than a small part of it. This means intense specialization and, as Steiner has shown, specialization is an enemy of quality in language since it lacks resonance and universal reference.

Secondly, the very facility of the media can become a snare. That so many of the world's artistic masterpieces are available at the turn of a switch is an enormous privilege, for which it would be mean-spirited not to be grateful. We are fortunate beyond the dreams of even the richest and most cultivated of our ancestors. Yet the gospel warns us that we can easily be spoiled by riches. The ease with which these treasures can be drawn upon may make us forget that it still requires effort adequately to appropriate them. It is not enough to read, look, or hear. We have to mark, learn, and inwardly digest. Even the best music becomes little more than Muzak when it is used only as audible wallpaper.

Thirdly, most modern media have a built-in trivializing tendency, especially when they come to us in a framework determined by the needs of commercial advertizing. This becomes positively sinister when the media are used for the sale, not of goods, but of ideas and "personalities," especially in the spheres of politics and religion. Dan Boorstin's book *The Image*<sup>3</sup> has called attention to the corrupt influence of the media in

"image-building" and the manufacture of pseudo-events. Those concerned to restore the image of God must fight to restore the honesty of communication in the media, where our Yea is our Yea and we strive to speak the truth in love. We need to update our conception of Christian eikonography. If advertizing there must be, let it be on an appropriate level of manifest triviality, about the relative merits of breakfast foods and shampoos, and let Christian evangelism, concerned with faithful "traditioning," avoid it like the plague.

The implication of this is that Christian use of large-scale media should be much more discriminating and self-critical than it frequently is. These media may provide fresh opportunities for Christian proclamation and education but only when we realize how easily the still, small voice can be lost, both because of their vested interest in winds, earthquakes, and fires and because of the ceaseless buzz of their idle chatter. We know that the devil's most effective weapon is distraction. This means that we should venture to use the media with reserve, striving so to handle them that they can focus and deepen our attention rather than merely dissipate it.

Most reports made by religious organizations about broadcasting, the most typical of the modern media, have concentrated on emphasizing the importance of making religious broadcasting more technically competent, or on scolding churches for not spending more time and money on them. As far as I know, it is rarely suggested that churches should be more sparing in their use of the media and that the quality of what they offer—according to their own standards of quality—is more important than its quantity. The mediocrity and the excessive verbosity of much ut-

<sup>3</sup> New York: Harper, 1961.

terance on Christian themes does far more damage than silence. What goes for the spoken word also goes for the printed one. Christian publication has a special responsibility to aspire to a degree of excellence in style, content, presentation, and readability which can serve as a model for other forms of communication. Steiner points out that this has been done by the great Bible translations.

Christians should also show discrimination in the way they attend to what the media offer as well as in making their own contribution. A little junk food probably does no great harm, although there are degrees of acceptability even in junk. A staple diet of junk food is disastrous. What books or papers one reads and buys, and what programs one watches or listens to, should be matters of careful judgment. If in our use of the media we should be as gentle as doves, as recipients of what they offer we should be as wise as serpents. The chief factors in depressing standards are public passivity and gullibility. Christians should be nobody's fools and very quick on the draw. They are fortunate that their most effective weapon in the communication battle is a nonviolent one: that of switching off.

What is even more important is that the Christian community itself must have very firm ideas about how to conduct its own internal life in a world where the influence of the media is pervasive. We have seen that the most significant form of communication for Christians is that which they have with one another. I believe that the quality of this internal communication is best maintained and improved by the way in which it differs from rather than reflects what prevails in the world of the media.

In a time when people are bombarded by headlines, TV sensations, and advertisements, and where few areas of life are free from being quantified and manipulated mechanically to someone's advantage, the Christian community should deliberately exercise a countervailing influence. Its characteristic gatherings should be small and, when they are large, as unlike mass meetings as possible. Study and reflection should be encouraged. Services should be quiet and people should train themselves again to sit together in silence. What visual images there are in churches should possess the dignity, purity, and repose of long association. Churches should be almost pathologically resistant to the techniques of pressurizing salesmanship, even in the best of causes. The art of collection-raising needs a puritan reformation. Preaching should not hector or woo people into agreement with the preacher. Preaching is not a form of seduction but an attempt to help people listen for themselves with self-critical attention because the Word of God is not likely to be heard if the preacher's voice is too much like that of a salesman in the world's noisy marketplace. Personal relationships should be cultivated, but, equally, in this slack and loose-lipped age, their dignity and costliness should be respected. We do not achieve true Christian fellowship by being ordered from the pulpit to greet, still less to embrace, the person who happens to be in the next pew. The cult of "personalities," especially religious "personalities," should be eschewed. In ways which they themselves would surely have deplored, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King are treated by some Christians as "celebrities" rather than as saints. The most insidious form of

secularism is unconscious and, through the influence of the media, it has pervaded churches to a greater extent than most of us are prepared to acknowledge.

This attitude is the reverse of being merely negative or escapist. The best contribution that the Christian community can make to general health, including ultimately the health of the media themselves, is by having the independence and courage to be faithful to its own highest standards, even if it means going against prevailing trends. We must take account of these trends but that is not the same as merely submitting to them. It is often said, for example, that watching television makes it difficult for people to listen to a sermon, even one of modest present-day length, because they are supposed to want to be distracted very quickly from having to watch talking heads. We should be aware of this but, instead of shortening our sermons still further or providing more distraction, we should concentrate on trying to extend the span of people's attention by improving the quality of our presentation. Unless they can be helped again to attend, to wait upon God in the Word, to watch and to pray, they will fail to hear that Word even in church.

This is not to imply that we should pass by the media on the other side and refuse to acknowledge the great benefits which their discriminating use can bring. It is to argue that we should not take the standards which prevail in their most prominent parts as normative for our own conduct and, perhaps, that we should treat some of the claims made by their most insistent protagonists, even within the churches, with a measure of ironic detachment. The world of the media is more like a marketplace than

a workshop and we should enter it in the spirit of intelligent shoppers, remembering the motto *Caveat emptor*. It is where ideas, entertainment, works of art and even of religion are put on display in the hope of making a sale. It is not where these are conceived and born, nurtured, and developed, where—to change the metaphor—seed is sown, strikes roots, and is cultivated. As servants of God's kingdom, we should be much more interested in the latter processes than in the former. By all means let us visit the marketplace; some of us may even elect to become stallholders. It can be lively and colorful, the noise and bustle and competition can be enjoyable, and the packaging and the cult of novelty can be amusing, but we should never forget that this is no more than the marketplace. As Paul found in the Areopagus at Athens, the marketplace may be of some use for making contacts but much less effective for making genuine converts. Those who inhabit or visit marketplaces may not be swine but they are mainly buyers and sellers of costume jewelry; they have rarely brought enough with them to contemplate making an offer for the pearl of great price.

It follows from this that we should avoid the mistake of judging the effectiveness of Christian communication by the kind of reception our goods receive in the marketplace. Can any of us claim to be more faithful preachers than the Paul who received such a mixed reception at the Areopagus? If we succeed in the marketplace, we can be grateful but must enquire anxiously of ourselves whether we have been better at packaging and labeling than at ensuring that what we offer is the veritable Word of God. We must not expect the marketplace to be other than it is and must

emphatically take care that its values do not invade the inner life of the church, or of those places of learning related to the church, so that, in effect, they become little more than extensions of the marketplace.

Again, this is not to imply that we can afford to be indifferent to the quality of the media, even as marketplaces. There is a world of difference between a good and a bad market, and the effort required to keep a market good should not be underestimated. I have lived for ten years in the shadow of the great financial institutions of the City of London and know how vigilantly they have to safeguard their reputations. The same is true on their own level of those who supervise the street markets in which we buy fruit and vegetables. Christians should, of course, be active in television, radio, and popular publishing, and perhaps more so in the spheres of general news, children's programs, and popular entertainment than in directly religious presentations, where it is easy to become over-solemn at the wrong places and where people have built-in defenses which hinder effective communication. Direct religious presentations can be made through the media but we should be under no illusions as to their difficulty if triviality and gross oversimplification are to be avoided. This is confirmed rather than contradicted by the kind of success achieved by some forms of direct religious presentation in the media. Some Christians will have a special vocation to serve the media. For the rest, limited Christian resources are best spent in exploring ways of improving the quality of genuine human communication through them rather than in trying to beat the commercial world at its own game. We should never lose sight of the fact that our primary

concern is not with calling attention to ourselves and what we have to offer in the marketplace but with the knowledge and service of God in our own lives together.

In the end, although the preoccupation of their managers with short-term successes and rewards may prevent them from seeing it, this is the way in which we serve the media best. The most memorable media events are not those manufactured specifically for use by the media but those which express a human concern derived from a more enduring source and which follow their own logic. In the long run, a pseudo-event does not stand a chance against a real event. Even in the world of symbols and of "celebrities," the British royal wedding outdistanced the biggest show-business bonanza. And I always take comfort from the story of J. R. R. Tolkien. If a prize had been offered in prewar Oxford for naming the don least likely to succeed as a best-selling writer, the nomination of that unobtrusive, squeaky-voiced, Anglo-Saxon scholar would have been an easy winner. There may have been a fortuitous element in his phenomenal success, but it would not have been possible unless he had possessed the integrity, perseverance, and flair to pursue his own interests, regardless of whether a wider public was interested or not, awakening in young people in many lands a hunger for a kind of experience they would otherwise never have contemplated. When we strive to serve and proclaim the gospel with a similar independence and integrity, this will sometimes happen for us and sometimes it will not. Success in the world of the media is always a hit-or-miss affair. What is certain is that it will not happen at all if our first concern is to win success on

the media's own terms, because, in doing that, we shall have nothing distinctive to offer.

To return to where we began: Because Christian faith is a matter of communion, it is concerned with communication but the way in which it communicates should be expressive of the grace and truth of God's Word in

Jesus Christ. This can never be done without struggle. The advent of modern media of communication, potentially a source of blessing, intensifies that struggle. As George Steiner says at the very end of this great book *After Babel*, it would be ironic if the answer to Babel were pidgin and not Pentecost.

# The Stone Lectures in Wartime

by JAMES R. BLACKWOOD

DURING World War II one of President John A. Mackay's visionary plans became a reality. *Theology Today*, Volume 1, Number 1, came off the press. The editors had asked Professor Howard Lowry, who was then teaching English literature at Princeton University, to write on "Liberal Education Tomorrow." In his article for *Theology Today*, Professor Lowry observed that most colleges and universities, even in wartime, were plotting their own reformation. He neglected to say that he chaired such a committee at Princeton University, working closely with President Harold W. Dodds. While V-12s and Army trainees marched outside their windows, they, and others like them elsewhere, peered into the future and braced themselves for the millennium.

Before long Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood, Sr., my father, invited Howard Lowry to give the Stone Lectures at Princeton Seminary. This happened at our dining room table; Howard was a friend of the family. He hesitated for perhaps three seconds, then quietly said it would be an honor to try his hand at the lectures. Howard was never good at saying "no."

There would be five lectures on a topic still to be determined. Father, of course, had in mind something like "The Bible in English Literature." Howard accepted the invitation but entertained

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thoughts of his own. He had time, though not much leisure, to settle on a topic. Since he had made tragedy one of his fields of concentration, he began to think, off and on, about lectures he wished to give the following year on tragic drama. Christians, he thought, had paid scant attention to their allies, the tragic dramatists, who belonged to the same era as the prophets of the Old Testament.

Meanwhile, The College of Wooster called Howard Lowry to be its seventh president. Wartime pressures, overloads, and round-the-year schedules had been wearing enough at Princeton University. These became still more intense in the presidency of a church-related college. "Acceleration" was the order of the day on every campus. Dean H. William Tausch, a long-time friend, recalled that he had never seen Howard more nervous and irritable than in the final week that led up to the Stone Lectures at the seminary.

On April 5, 1945, Miller Chapel was filling up as I worked my way to the front, sat, and waited for the first of five lectures on "The Tragic Resolution." Several members from the Department of English at the university were there, among them Professor-emeritus Charles G. Osgood, who had given the Stone Lectures in 1940. (His "advice to young seminarians about their

reading" became a charming book, *Poetry as a Means of Grace*, one year later.) Seldom, if ever, had so many people from the university attended an event at the seminary. It was a brainy crowd. John A. Mackay stood at the top of the chancel steps, halfway between lectern and pulpit, as he introduced a man already well-known to a large number in the audience.

[President Mackay] put his fingertips together, blinked, pursed his lips, tilted his chin in the air, sniffed once or twice as if to see which way the ecumenical winds were blowing, and without a note in view gave an accurate and full biographical account, with titles and dates, of "our distinguished guest, President Howard Foster Lowry of The College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio, whose first lecture will be 'The Enigma of Tragedy.'"<sup>1</sup>

Howard Lowry expressed "pleasure in returning" to Princeton. Briefly, he spoke about the war in Europe and Asia, which would permeate all he said without becoming the subject of his discourse. The Battle of the Bulge had ended. Early next month the Germans would surrender to the Allies. In the Pacific, Iwo Jima and Okinawa had been taken, but there were unsuspecting months to wait for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Global war, in other words, became the grim backdrop for our thoughts on tragedy. The millennium hadn't yet come. We all had friends who had died in combat.

As he began to speak, Howard Lowry shuffled the pages in front of him. His

fingers twitched and fidgeted. Otherwise, he looked calm and, some would have said, serene. He sketched an outline for his talks on the first page of his manuscript, here condensed:

*Monday:* to speak on the paradox of tragic drama, and to reflect with philosophers and others who have grappled with the meaning of this paradox.

*Tuesday:* to present *one* view of tragedy related to the "selfless self," the central theme of the lectures, an idea bearing on the deepest problems of our present-day life and thought.

*Wednesday:* to follow this idea (and related ideas) in the tragedies of Shakespeare.

*Thursday afternoon:* to trace these ideas further in contemporary literature.

*Thursday evening:* to examine the relationship of the four preceding lectures to the Christian interpretation of life.<sup>2</sup>

Having written this preview in full, President Lowry scratched the whole of it with one hasty, diagonal line of a pencil, probably because he considered it dull. Gracefully, he eased into his introduction:

We shall have to slight or ignore many of the interesting technical questions of spectacle, diction, plot, and other techniques that in any course in tragedy would naturally be half (or even more than half) of the fun. These lectures are not a close study in literary analysis but, in

<sup>1</sup> James R. Blackwood, *Howard Lowry: A Life in Education*, published by The College of Wooster (1975), p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Quotations from the Stone Lectures, "The Tragic Resolution," are taken from Howard Lowry's handwritten script, which gives evidence of having been written at different times and places, some of it under extreme wartime pressure.

broader strokes, the examination of an idea or a human problem.

Even so, I hope that occasionally the voice of the philosophers and all the other owl-eyed gentry—certainly the heavy wisdom of your present lecturer—will die away, and you may hear the voice of more ingratiating people, the poets themselves. . . .

Too often the philosophers' treatment of the poets, particularly the tragic poets, is a futile performance, reminding me of what Mr. Yeats once said of a lady he could never influence or understand: "She is like a china egg on which I have sat for years." This comforts one as he listens to Hegel clucking over *Antigone*.

We followed Howard Lowry along "a path of thorns within a gloomy wood," accompanied in turn by Aristotle, by Hume and Hegel, by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Every one of them, to be sure, had hit upon high points worth considering, but none had arrived at a completely satisfying theory of tragedy. Weighing various theories and giving each its due—tragedy as *catharsis*, as eloquence, as a rift in the moral order, as a stark lesson in the absurdity of life—Howard Lowry went on to suggest that these analysts (except for Nietzsche) had lacked one essential thing, the poet's touch. He spoke brilliantly from an otherwise blank page in his manuscript, which had just one word at the top: "Nietzsche."

Notwithstanding all that the philosophers had said, "Wordsworth saw it better—that there *are* terrible calamities,"

and in the after vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men  
betrayed;

Suffering is permanent, obscure,  
and dark,  
And shares the nature of infinity.

"Yet it little surprises us that the philosophers have wondered. Who hasn't wondered? Who hasn't asked: 'What is the answer to this enigma or paradox of tragedy?' " As one scholar had put it, tragedy "kindles fires it should extinguish," instead of depressing, exalts us, and by wrenching, terrifying, and baffling us, ultimately lifts us from raw excitement to quiet contemplation.<sup>3</sup>

I came back for the second round, "One View of Tragedy," determined to see the series through, partly because of my admiration for the speaker, but even more because he was "speaking to my condition." I thought his phrase *the selfless self* awkward and academic, and he confessed afterward that he thought so, too. Nevertheless he was exploring "some of the deepest instincts in our nature—two powerful forces that work together upon us, one way or another, almost every day of our lives." He noted first the age-old assertion of the *self*. A burst of creative energy, the shock of loneliness or isolation, the conviction of sin, all sharply reveal this individual uniqueness. What's more, as Professor Theodore Greene of Princeton University had remarked, a lively sense of personal identity furnishes us our only acceptable standard for the love of others: "Love thy neighbor *as thyself*."

A shadow falls across this natural self-expression; a depressing egoism dogs its every step. "The self-consciousness which is our glory and distinction

<sup>3</sup> See W. MacNeile Dixon, *Tragedy*. London: Edward Arnold & Co. (1929), p. 145. Howard Lowry's copy is heavily underlined, and often crowded with marginal notes.

somehow is our embarrassment as well." Too often the soldier who risks his life on the battlefield becomes a hero vain and fussy about his medals; the professor begins to calculate the teacher's influence in the shaping of young minds; the poet finds a most appealing image in the mirror; the missionary starts counting converts, just as dollar signs gleam in the eyes of a minister checking off those who will join the congregation next Sunday. Little wonder Jeremy Taylor asked that nobody tell him he had preached a great sermon!

At the time it struck me that the newer breed of theologians found themselves caught in a polarity, or tension, they had no discernible wish to relax. Howard Lowry, on the other hand, was expressing a desire to resolve the old contradiction between "the self we would keep and the self we would lose." Yet who could at the same time assert and renounce his own selfhood? "Where can we find the paradox we seek, the selfless self?" Here lay the heart of the matter: "It is my thesis," Howard Lowry declared, "that men have known this selfless self in the high moments of tragic drama and that the noblest function of tragedy has been this simultaneous miracle of self-assertion and self-deliverance."

If you would validate the self and raise it to its real authority, attend to the tragic heroes and heroines and warm yourself with their fire. . . . Not only do they assert the self, but they raise the self to a pitch beyond. From Aristotle on we observe that "magnitude" in some form or other is the mark of great tragedy; and in this "magnitude" the self of the tragic hero must unmistakably share.

But great tragedy does more than

display the authentic self in action. It shows the self transcended—caught up in a new order, as it were, until those who watch can see, both in the persons of the play and in themselves, a felicity that life on its own level too rarely affords—the paradox of the selfless self.

In the chorus of Greek drama, Howard Lowry heard "the universal note of tragedy," singing of the tortured and bewildered soul, "violent, struck down, humbled, resigned, and *exalted*." From Greek plays he drew examples to light up his thesis: that the self, in losing its life, "has earned something that does not belong to death." Of the five lectures, the seminary students found the one on Greek drama the most difficult to follow, perhaps because many of them were less familiar with Oedipus in the twilight at Colonus than they were with Hamlet's brooding, "To be or not to be."

Who could bind and deliver Shakespeare in one evening? In the third lecture, Howard kept his aim steadily in view, dealing only with Shakespearian tragedies and concentrating on the single theme of the selfless self in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and above all in *King Lear*. The Elizabethan playwright did much in the Globe Theatre that would have infuriated an Athenian audience. One premise from Greek drama, however, Shakespeare kept. "Tragedy involves *personal magnitude*, men and women of stature, distinguished by either their intellect or their passion." Shakespeare, too, had witnessed the ravages of evil, the terrible waste that drags down the innocent with the guilty, and he had faced the tragic fact "as squarely as it has ever been faced."

In all of tragedy, as Howard Lowry saw it, the supreme moment came not in a rush of eloquent speech "but in some of the homeliest language that Shakespeare ever wrote." The dying Lear, the old self nearly consumed in him, looks down at the dead body of his child, Cordelia:

Thou'lt come no more,  
Never, never, never, never, never.  
Pray you, undo this button.

Somehow that button draws into itself the tragic bewilderment, futility, and pain of the whole, round earth, and the battered king, who once ruled with an iron hand, cannot undo even the smallest part of it. Once more, with utter simplicity, the conflict is resolved as a friend leans over to help the king with his button. As he dies, once-proud Lear is magnificent in a humility that he attains in three short words, "Thank you, sir."

But what of modern drama? Was tragedy—that is, tragic drama—possible in our time? Two World Wars had certainly dispelled any shallow thoughts of death. Even so, a young woman who had attended the lecture on Shakespeare wondered what had happened to tragedy since the invention of scotch tape and the zipper. To this problem Howard Lowry turned in his next address. Few critics, indeed, proved more devastating than Howard, who stood aghast at a mechanized age that kept producing tons of "triviality in triplicate." Still he could not go along with modern critics who stressed the common man to such an extent that they changed molten tragedy into lukewarm sociology. Deliverance, if it came, in this view would follow a shift in economic tides, or would issue without thought from secretions of the glands.

Howard protested: "Heredity pours its stream of ambiguity into every human life, and the self degenerates into a plurality of selves, neither frost nor flower." Joseph Wood Krutch, in *The Modern Temper*, had spoken for many other critics who held that since no one believed in the Glory of God any more, and the Glory of Man had turned into something of a farce, there could be no personal magnitude, and therefore no such thing as modern tragedy.

Had Fate become the Social Order? The Inequality of Races? The Economic Struggle of Submerged Classes? Howard Lowry maintained that one could hardly dogmatize upon the intellectual frame of mind necessary for tragedy if one human factor had been fulfilled. So long as the world appeared in the guise of the G.I. in a foxhole, the convict dragging along in a chain gang, or the Okie escaping the Dust Bowl drought, we would have "the essential human maladjustment" to which tragedy gives a body, a voice, and a song.

Taking more than a sidelong glance at Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and Maxwell Anderson's flawed but moving *Winterset*, Howard Lowry went on to compare and, still more, contrast the works of two contemporary poets best fitted to take the pulse of the world's most gainful paradox: "The attainment of individuality without its weight of ego." The poets were W. B. Yeats—the handling of Yeats was superb—and T. S. Eliot. *The Waste Land*, for all its dry, dreary images, is not a poem of despair. For Eliot, perhaps more than any other poet of his time, believed that through penitence and regeneration the dead land and the dead people in it could be born again.

With mixed feelings, I came to the closing address, "The Christian Resolution." I felt gratitude, first of all, that so much of my earlier education had precipitated, crystalized, in so short a time; then regret that I'd never taken any of Howard Lowry's courses in English literature; and finally a sense of renewal in my quest for what might still become "the selfless self," answering the call of Christ, "He that will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Vaguely, too, I wanted to share what I had received, and perhaps, if the way opened up, to put in written form some tithe of this abundance. Otherwise, who could tell what might be lost? Without knowing it, I had started on a biography of Howard Lowry, which would be published thirty years later.

His final address was not so much analysis, or the examination of a human problem, as it was glowing testimony. Only three pages remain from his treatment of Christianity as a dramatic religion. (These are in pencil. I'm fairly sure he wrote them quickly and late.) The testimony, however, to Jesus Christ as the crucified and risen Lord was piercingly clear, full and free, and profoundly moving. I can see Howard standing in the white box pulpit of Miller Chapel as he gave the Stone Lectures in wartime. From notes and memory, I recall the closing words, asking if the death of Jesus, viewed for the moment simply as drama, did not do what all high tragedy does.

To start with, it outrages every decent expectation of what ought to be. What nails Jesus to the Cross is not some "tragic flaw," however, but a great simplicity of life; not guilt but goodness, a goodness beyond the standards that compass ordinary men; not the lunge of ambition, but the full exercise of his manly powers under the control of a desire to be getting on with what he has to do; not a vacillating mind, a brooding intellect, an erratic, unruly will, or habitual hardness of heart, not anger or jealousy or pride or the obscene, writhing impulses of lust, but the grace of the humble; not masochistic joy in pain, but a life so lived as to make it believable that the highest truth about the self is not its selfhood.

What drives Rome's iron through Israel's flesh is not some obvious fault of Jesus, therefore, but his magnificence. His death lays open the violent paradox of innocence bearing guilt. Here is the true catharsis or self-emptying: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Here, if anywhere, is the radiant mystery of the selfless self. And here, too, in our search for something beyond the telling, we may be caught up into a new order of reality, purged, exalted, changed.

The Christian resolution rises out of tragic depths. "*Ubi Magnitudo, Ibi Veritas*"—"Where magnitude is, there is truth."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Howard Lowry: *A Life in Education*, p. 167.

# John Knox: The Main Themes of His Thought

by Richard G. Kyle

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## Introduction

SCHOLARS have viewed John Knox, the leading figure of the Scottish Reformation, as a man of action rather than as a thinker. Knox, indeed, was neither a theologian nor a political theorist. To derive any highly structured theology or political thought from his writings would be to create something that the reformer never intended. His vocation was to be a preacher of the gospel and not a writer nor an ecclesiastical organizer or official. Therefore, his main duty in life was, as he expressed it frequently, "to blow my master's trumpet." He saw himself as a preaching, rather than as a writing, prophet, proclaiming the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ and rebuking the sins and vices of all.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, Knox wrote frequently and produced pamphlets, *A History of the Reformation in Scotland*, and numerous letters. All told, these writings fill more than six volumes. If Maurice Lee is correct, Knox wrote only when he could not preach to his selected audiences.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, Knox

preached extemporaneously and his sermons, which were perhaps the most accurate barometer of his thought, have not survived. Therefore, Knox's thought must be reconstructed from these six volumes. Any analysis of Knox's thought, however, must be a piecemeal process because the reformer failed to systematize his thinking. Nearly every treatise, pamphlet, letter, or book that he wrote was in response to a concrete problem.

Though Knox rarely spoke systematically on theological doctrine or political theory, he did have much to say about these subjects; and from his polemical writings, it is possible to formulate significant reflections on these subjects, i.e., authority, God, Christ, the church, the covenant, the sacraments, salvation, human nature, Satan, the antichrist, Christ's return, and resistance to constituted political authority.<sup>3</sup> It is, however, beyond the scope of this article to deal with all of these topics. Therefore, I will address specific themes that serve, in my opinion, as the foun-

*Scottish Historical Review*, XIX (April, 1966), p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Two recent studies have attempted, in varying degrees, to analyze Knox's thought over these areas. They are Richard Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian University Press, 1980) and Richard Kyle, *The Mind of John Knox* (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1983).

<sup>1</sup> John Knox, *The Works of John Knox*, 6 Vols., edited by David Laing (Edinburgh: Printed for the Bannatyne Club, 1846-1864, Vol. VI), p. 229. Hereafter this will be cited as *Works* followed by the appropriate volume and page number. See also W. Stanford Reid, *Trumpeter of God* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974), p. xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Lee, "John Knox and His History,"

dation for his thought in all areas. Though John Knox certainly was "orthodox" in that he adhered to the basic principles of the Magisterial Reformation; he, nevertheless, was a man of the Old Testament. The main motifs of his thought, the ideas upon which most other aspects of his thought converge, are concepts most readily found in the Old Testament. These focal themes include Knox's concept of reform, his notion of authority and particularly his methods of interpreting Scripture, his emphasis on divine immutability and sovereignty, his desire to purify religion, his concept of sin, and his theory of resistance to idolatrous rulers.

### *Concept of Reform*

The word *reform* means to correct what is wrong and to restore to a former and better condition. The religious abuses that Knox wished to correct were, of course, what he termed to be the "dregs of papistry," i.e., the Roman Catholic Mass and everything related to it. Essentially, he strove for a corporate return of Scottish religion to the ideal of spiritual Israel. Though Knox by no means ignored individual salvation and worship, he emphasized primarily corporate religion and Old Testament instructions.<sup>4</sup> Because the reformer stressed divine immutability and had little sense of progressive revelation and historical change, he saw sixteenth-century Scotland as a mirror of ancient Israel. Knox viewed himself as a model of a Hebrew prophet, and therefore, demanded that the doctrine and worship of the Scottish church be restored to the purity that God had

commanded of Israel.<sup>5</sup> Although the Scottish reformer seldom succeeded completely in actualizing this concept of reform, its imprint, nevertheless, bore indelibly on his thought.

Every reformation needs a means to implement its objectives. Knox planned to use the "Christian Commonwealth" as the primary instrument for restoring the purity of Scottish religion. As Knox's concept of reform reflected his Old Testament orientation, so did his vehicle of reform, the "Christian Commonwealth." According to Knox, and the other authors of the *Book of Discipline*, a "Christian Commonwealth" was a country in which both the civil and ecclesiastical powers cooperated in the cultivation of what they believed to be "true religion." They accepted the idea that government had a responsibility for establishing "true religion" and for abolishing all held to be contrary to it. In effecting such a religious reformation the civil power was, nevertheless, strictly limited. The rulers had no power to admit anything not approved by Scripture. Given this understanding between the two powers, Knox could not accept a Catholic queen as sovereign and maintain at the same time the Reformed church. In the light of Knox's concept of reform and his vision of the "Christian Commonwealth," one must view his struggle with Mary Stewart, the Catholic queen of Scotland.<sup>6</sup>

### *Scripture: Its Authority and Interpretation*

John Knox, as is commonly known, advocated some ideas that were con-

<sup>5</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 171, 191; IV, p. 399; VI, p. 408.

<sup>6</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 183 ff.; James K. Cameron (ed.), *The First Book of Discipline* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1972) p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 74, 143, 190-191, 193-194; IV, pp. 123, 187, 489-490, 501, 539-540, 505; II, pp. 372-373; V, pp. 517, 484, 265.

troversial for his time. Perhaps the most radical of his positions concerned the purification of worship and resistance to idolatrous rulers. For these notions Knox was indebted to many sources, both secular and religious, but foremost, is that of his methods of interpreting Scripture.

Knox believed the Word of God to be, primarily, the canonical Scriptures found in the Old and New Testaments. Nevertheless, he did not limit the Word of God to the text of Scripture; to him the Word was also a vibrant, living power. Occasionally, he equated the Word with the person of Christ, the power of God, and the gospel message.<sup>7</sup> For the most part John Knox made God's Word, as revealed in Scripture, his sole authority. In questions pertaining to the faith, the reformer subordinated all other authorities whether they be the Church of Rome, church councils, tradition, individual conscience, majority opinion, or even princes and parliaments to God's Word.<sup>8</sup> The source of Knox's radicalness and uniqueness, however, did not lie in his views on the nature of God's Word or its authority. In these respects the Scottish reformer did not differ greatly from Calvin, Luther, and Zwingli. Rather, Knox's theological trademark devolved from two features of his biblical interpretation, namely, an over-emphasis on

the Old Testament and pronounced literalness.

There exists between the teachings of the Old and New Testaments both a large degree of continuity and discontinuity. Jesus Christ himself illustrated this. He demonstrated continuity in his insistence that he came to fulfill the law, but the fulfillment of such was discontinuity because Christ proceeded to give a deeper, more searching meaning to God's moral law. In respect to over-emphasizing continuity at the expense of discontinuity, Knox experienced some problems.<sup>9</sup>

Two dangers exist in theology regarding the relationship between the Old and New Testaments: they are either stated to be identical or to differ substantially. John Calvin's solution was to recognize the unity of substance between the two testaments while pointing to the difference in administration.<sup>10</sup> As we come to Knox, he not only agreed with Calvin concerning the lack of difference in substance between the Old and New Testaments, but he over-emphasized this. His failure to recognize a discontinuity between the testaments led to an overidentification of the Old with the New Testament. Though Knox believed the Old Testament foreshadowed the things revealed in the New, he did not believe the New superseded the Old, except, of course, in regards to matters such as the atonement or the new covenant.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Works*, II, p. 145; V, p. 420. See also Pierre Janton, *Concept et Sentiment De L' Eglise Chez John Knox: le reformateur ecossais* (Paris: Presses Universitaires De France, 1972), p. 174; V. E. D'Assonville, *John Knox and the Institutes of Calvin: A Few Points of Contact in Their Theology* (Durban: Drakensberg Press, Limited, 1968), p. 69.

<sup>8</sup> *Works*, I, pp. 194, 196-197; III, p. 166; IV, pp. 231, 80, 133-138, 446, 469-470, 478; V, pp. 59, 310, 421, 516; II, pp. 93, 96, 112; III, pp. 75, 351; IV, p. 446.

<sup>9</sup> James McEwen, *The Faith of John Knox* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1961), pp. 39-40; D'Assonville, *Knox and the Institutes*, pp. 73-75.

<sup>10</sup> Adrien Mezger, *John Knox et ses rapports avec Calvin* (Montauban: Imprimerie Cooperative, 1905), pp. 76-77; D'Assonville, *Knox and the Institutes*, pp. 71-73.

<sup>11</sup> *Works*, II, p. 111; Richard Greaves, "The Nature of Authority in the Writings of John Knox," *Fides et Historia*, X, No. 2 (Spring, 1978),

More specifically, Knox's major premise drawn from Deuteronomy 12:32 dominated his view of Scripture. At the onset of his public ministry in St. Andrews Castle, he quoted from it: "All that the Lord thy God commands thee to do, that do thou to the Lord thy God: add nothing to it; diminish nothing from it." By this rule, think I, that the Kirk of Christ will measure God's religion, and not by that which seems good in their own eyes.<sup>12</sup> Because John Knox made this verse the focal point of his biblical interpretation, his theology acquired its own trademark. The consequences of this literal Old Testament hermeneutic, with its starting point in Deuteronomy 12:32, manifested itself clearly in Knox's drive to purify religion; which in turn, provided the motivation for Knox's notions of resistance to idolatrous rulers.

The second trait of Knox's biblical interpretation is his pronounced literalness. All of the major reformers—Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli—employed the literal method of interpreting Scripture in varying degrees. Luther believed that the Bible must be elucidated according to its simple literal sense. Nevertheless, he modified his literalness by insisting that Scripture must be interpreted through the perspective of the gospel and is thus Christocentric.<sup>13</sup> Calvin also asserted a literal interpretation of Scripture, but he placed an emphasis on the interior

witness of the Holy Spirit as a means of assistance in this explication.<sup>14</sup> When we come to Knox, we see that he did not have Luther's Christ centeredness nor Calvin's interior witness to modify the rigidity of his literalness.

Biblical interpretation can emphasize the substantive content of Scripture or the literal form of the Bible. We find Luther, on several occasions, accentuating the substance of the Bible over the literal form of Scriptures. Calvin, however, maintained a healthy balance between the substance and the letter of the Scriptures. Knox, in contrast to Luther and Calvin, but somewhat like Zwingli, placed the literal forms of Scripture above its substantive content. This can be seen especially in the Scottish reformer's crusade against idolatry and theory of resistance to rulers.<sup>15</sup> In fact, Knox often transferred people and events from the Old and New Testaments to his own time so literally that historical repetition occurred. He constantly drew parallels between Israel and Scotland and Israel and England—parallels that often went beyond analogies or lessons and seem to become historical equations.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Francois Wendel, *Calvin: The Origins and Development of His Religious Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 157-159; Rupert E. Davies, *The Problem of Authority in the Continental Reformers* (London: The Epworth Press, 1946), p. 118. For additional information see H. Jackson Forstman, *Word and Spirit* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962).

<sup>15</sup> *Works*, IV, pp. 232, 437, 468; III, pp. 280 ff., 34-38; V, p. 516; II, p. 446.

<sup>16</sup> D'Assonville, *Knox and the Institutes*, pp. 74, 75. An important issue here is, did history become another source of revelation for Knox, as it appears to have become for Puritans such as Thomas Beard who wrote *Theatre of God's Judgments*? See Ronald J. Vander Molen, "Providence as Mystery, Providence as Revelation: Puritan and Anglican Modifications of John Calvin's

pp. 45, 46; McEwen, *The Faith of John Knox*, pp. 39, 40.

<sup>12</sup> *Works*, I, p. 197.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 76-80. Luther regarded the Book of Romans as containing the key to the whole Word of God. By gospel, Luther did not mean the four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but the message of the gospel.

*Divine Immutability and Sovereignty*

A focal point in Knox's thinking, and particularly his political thought, was his concept of God. In his *History*, the reformer clearly rejected the concept that limited God to heaven or had him quiescent.<sup>17</sup> Rather, the God of John Knox intervened in human affairs; nothing transpired in history that God had not ordained because his providence encompassed all events. As the sovereignty of God dominated Calvin's thought, the immutability of God was central to Knox's. Though immutability is but an aspect of divine sovereignty, such a modification can be seen as a shift in emphasis between Knox and Calvin. As one reads Knox's writings, the immutability of God pervades every aspect of his thought.

Without divine immutability, Knox's thought on history, predestination, providence, idolatry, the punishment of sin, political thought, and virtually everything else had little basis. Indeed, as Knox noted often, the law of God never changes. Therefore, God must respond to sin in the same manner in Scotland as he did at Sodom and Gomorrah, or anywhere. The justice of God is infinite and immutable, and what he damned in one place cannot be excused in another.<sup>18</sup> On occasions, the Scottish reformer saw God as responding to a situation in the same way at all times, and consequently somewhat of a prisoner of his own nature. Thus the stress on God's immutability led Knox to demand that God's law be up-

held in the Commonwealth of Scotland as if it were Old Testament Israel. Next, it inclined Knox to parallel events and people from the Old and New Testaments with events and people of his time so literally that history seemed to be reenacted. Finally, God's immutability played a central role in Knox's scheme of salvation. The reformer said that God's love toward his elect—those predestined to eternal salvation—is immutable; consequently those elected can never fall out of divine love nor be eternally lost. Election had taken place in God's eternal and immutable council and therefore could not change.<sup>19</sup>

In Knox's mind, the omnipotence and sovereignty of God ranked second only to his immutability.<sup>20</sup> These attributes emerge most often in the context of his predestination tract. Here Knox declared that God demonstrated his omnipotence in the battle with Satan, whose purpose God constantly frustrates. What seems at times as a victory for Satan is only an appearance, "for God is omnipotent, and is compelled to suffer nothing which he hath not appointed in His eternal counsel. . . ."<sup>21</sup> The reformer believed that all events are ordained by an omnipotent, immutable God whose eternal will and purpose cannot be frustrated by any creature, whether human or angelic. Knox apparently did not use the word *sovereign* in reference to God, but in the political arena this was certainly what the reformer implied for he desired God's

<sup>19</sup> *Works*, V, pp. 44-51.

<sup>20</sup> *Works*, I, p. 23; III, pp. 5-8, 84; V, pp. 33, 133, 390; VI, p. 415.

<sup>21</sup> *Works*, V, p. 193. In the same context, Knox said that the Godhead is free from passions. God is omnipotent and when the Holy Ghost used phrases such as, "God suffers" or "sorrows," God was simply subjecting himself to human language in order to help human understanding.

Doctrine of Providence," *Church History*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (March 1978), pp. 27-47, especially p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> *Works*, I, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 171, 191; IV, p. 399; VI, p. 408.

sovereignty to be established in a real sense in Scotland.<sup>22</sup>

Knox's concept of history virtually depended upon his concept of God. Utterly convinced of the sovereignty of God over all history, the reformer thus believed all occurrences, from the largest to the smallest, to be decreed by God for reasons known only to himself. Because Knox tended to transfer events from biblical times to his day, he saw the drama of the Old Testament being reenacted in Scotland, with himself as Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel all rolled into one. In his *History*, Knox did not portray the struggles (e.g., Protestantism versus Catholicism, church versus state, monarch versus people) in a political sense. Rather, Knox's *History* depicted a holy war "between the saints of God and these bloody wolves who claim themselves the title of clergy." In this dramatic struggle, which Knox's *History* described in epic fashion, God's hand manifested itself in all events.<sup>23</sup>

### *The Purification of Religion*

Knox's greatest anxiety was idolatry, which he equated with Roman Catholicism. To be a Catholic was to be an idolator. The fight against the "idolatrous" Mass so dominated his thinking that virtually no major area of his thought was free from it. Knox's anti-idolatry theme stemmed from his Old Testament hermeneutic and permeated his political thought, his doctrine of salvation, his sacramental and ecclesiastical thought, his view of church discipline, and even his perception of

Christ's office as high priest.<sup>24</sup> The fight against the "idolatrous" Mass, along with its counterpart, the establishment of "true worship," can be seen as the great motive of Knox's career. In pursuit of this objective, Knox exceeded the vigor of his Reformed colleagues, and perhaps in this excess displayed his most unique trait. The consequences of his literal Old Testament hermeneutic, with its starting point in Deuteronomy 12:32, manifested itself clearly in the fight against idolatry. From the very onset of his public career, to his death in 1572, Knox maintained great hostility to the "idolatrous" Mass.<sup>25</sup>

Though the crusade against idolatry, starting with Knox's first sermon in 1547, pervaded most of his writings, its logic is largely repetitious and can be illustrated by a selected passage. After Knox returned from a duration on a French galley in 1549, he denounced the Mass in northern England. From his defense of this denunciation came *A Vindication that the Mass is Idolatry* (1550), Knox's most direct attack on idolatry. The reformer's approach came in the form of two syllogisms. In these syllogisms, based on Deuteronomy 12:32, we can see the key to Knox's crusade against idolatry and perhaps to his thinking in general. In *A Vindication*, he did not define idolatry in the strict literal sense of substituting a false God for a true God. Rather, he interpreted idolatry in the widest sense possible; for idolatry, as he said, entails not only the worship of that which is not God, but also to trust in anything besides God. And to honor anything in religion contrary to God's Word is to

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, II, p. 283.

<sup>23</sup> Duncan Shaw (ed.), *John Knox: A Quatercentenary Reappraisal* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1975), pp. 4, 5; *Works*, I, pp. 4, 6, 131, 132, 351, 223; II, p. 417; I, pp. 270-272, 89, 205, 220.

<sup>24</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 34, 35, 38, 44, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54-61; IV, pp. 373-420; 433-459; 467-520, 523-538; V, pp. 503-522.

<sup>25</sup> Lord Eustace Percy, *John Knox* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 116.

lean on something other than God, and therefore, idolatry.<sup>26</sup>

Knox's crusade against idolatry certainly did not diminish after his major work on the subject. Though the reformer did not again attack idolatry so logically or so directly as he did in *A Vindication*, the theme, anchored in his Old Testament hermeneutic, continued to dominate his thought. During his exile (1554-1559), the crusade intensified but took different paths. In one place, Knox comforted believers who were being persecuted by the papists and warned them to separate from idolatry, while in another he denounced nations for their breaking of the covenant and for corporate idolatry. But increasingly, Knox developed his anti-idolatry theme in a political context and as a springboard to resistance. His reasoning, however, is largely a reiteration of that found in *A Vindication*.

### *Concept of Sin*

An important, though often overlooked, aspect of Knox's thought is his perception of sin. Two major features dominated his thinking in this regard, namely, the principle of active opposition to evil and the concept of corporate sin. He inseparably linked both with his political thought, his anti-idolatry position, his Old Testament thrust, his concept of God, and his idea of the covenant. A theological foundation for Knox's theory of rebellion to secular authority lay in his beliefs that not to resist evil actively was a transgression, and that a nation corporately sinned when it even so much as tolerated evil. To be sure, the reformer's theory of resistance to secular authority emerged from diverse influences, but

nonetheless, it depended on his concept of sin to a considerable degree.<sup>27</sup>

To even tolerate sin is itself a sin. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of such a belief to Knox's thought. To merely refrain from such iniquities as idolatry, blasphemy, adultery, sorcery, and witchcraft do not suffice. One must combat these sins actively, by force if necessary, and to follow with positive alternatives. Nearly all sixteenth-century religious leaders agreed that God must be obeyed rather than fellow human beings. Yet most would only grant passive disobedience to the sinful commands of secular authorities. Though some leaders permitted active opposition to evil, Knox not only allowed it, but insisted that it is a sin not to resist evil. In this we find him denouncing the doctrine of Christian obedience to a ruler as sinful.<sup>28</sup>

Knox did not confine the principle of active opposition to evil to any one point in his career, but it certainly intensified as his political thought became more radical and revolutionary. Traditionally, his principle of active resistance to sin and his theory of rebellion against secular authority have been viewed as synonymous. For the most part this is accurate, but not entirely so. Knox also believed it a duty to warn against sin and to pursue positive al-

<sup>27</sup> *Works*, II, pp. 338, 340, 486; *Works*, III, p. 191. Richard Greaves does not discount theology, but he places less emphasis on theology as the foundation of Knox's theory of resistance than does this writer. See Richard Greaves, "John Knox, the Reformed Tradition, and the Development of Resistance Theory." *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 48 (September 1976), p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Works*, IV, p. 496; J. W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: The Dial Press, Inc., 1928), pp. 102-120; Jasper Ridley, *John Knox* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 275, 276.

<sup>26</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 34, 35, 38, 44, 46, 52, 54.

ternatives in a nonpolitical context.<sup>29</sup> Actually Knox's attitude toward sin remained basically unchanged throughout his life. He consistently maintained that toleration of certain evils is sin and that the Christian must disobey the sinful commands of secular authorities. What changed was that Knox widened these principles into popular rebellion and directed them toward the secular authorities.

Knox's perception of his vocation closely related to his notion of active resistance to sin. Drawing from the book of Ezekiel, he warned of God's pronouncement upon the watchman who saw judgment coming and failed to warn the people to repent. Knox saw himself performing this role. His vocation was not primarily to remind each individual of their personal sin, but rather to be a watchman warning both church and nation of its corporate sin and God's approaching judgment. This conviction tremendously motivated Knox, because as he believed, failure to admonish Scotland and England would bring divine punishment upon himself.<sup>30</sup>

Knox's principle of active opposition to evil is closely related to his concept of corporate sin and responsibility. According to the reformer, not only must individuals combat evil but so must nations and peoples. And if they fail in this, they will be collectively punished. Such a theme recurred repeatedly in Knox's writings. For example, in *A Godly Letter* (1553-1554), he predicted that if Romanism were maintained in England because the people refused to resist, God would punish the nation. As the Hebrews were corporately punished for tolerating idolatrous rulers, so

would England if they yielded to Catholicism.<sup>31</sup> To support this, Knox cited the example of God punishing the entire tribe of Benjamin, not because all were adulterers, but because they tolerated it.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, corporate responsibility also involved the possibility of collective forgiveness. Accordingly, in a 1554 *Exposition upon Psalm VI*, Knox said if cities and nations repented, God would demonstrate the same mercy he showed to individuals who turned from sin.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Theory of Resistance*

John Knox was not basically a political theorist any more than he was a speculative theologian. In fact, Knox would have denied having political thought as such. His one purpose in life was to perform God's work, which he believed to be the reformation of religion in Scotland. Therefore, to divide Knox's thought into rigid religious and political categories would be rather artificial. Though Knox sought the reformation of religion rather than the adjustment of political grievances, one may never separate religious development from the secular realities of an era. Consequently, Knox's reform efforts cannot be divorced from the political milieu of Europe and Scotland.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 166, 167, 169, 170, 178, 187, 188. God would bring plagues on England as he had done to Israel. Greaves, "John Knox, the Reformed Tradition, and the Development of Resistance Theory," p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 189, 190.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 140.

<sup>34</sup> My contention that Knox was fundamentally concerned with the reformation of religion and that his political thought grew out of this concern does not go unchallenged. Those who also present a religious emphasis are: John R. Gray, "The Political Theory of John Knox," *Church History*, VIII (June 1939), pp. 132-147; W. J. Vesey, "The Sources of the Idea of Active

<sup>29</sup> *Works*, IV, pp. 78, 79.

<sup>30</sup> *Works*, II, pp. 334, 338, 340.

Knox desired the reformation of religion in Scotland, and in his mind this meant returning the Christian religion to the ideal of spiritual Israel. The great obstacle to such reform was the power of the Roman Catholic Church established by law and promoted by the civil power. For any reforming movement to succeed, it must somewhere find the power to effect the changes it desires; and the early Magisterial Reformers found that power in the temporal state. But Scotland did not have any sovereigns favorable to Protestantism as did the principalities of Luther's Germany, or the England of Edward VI. Thus for a Scottish Reformation to triumph, its proponents must advocate the overthrow of established temporal authority, the seizure of political power, and the use of that power to bring down the Roman Church. In such a setting, Knox's thought turned to a resistance theory.

John Knox did not develop his theory of resistance in a vacuum. Both the sequence of events and the thought of his time influenced it. The Scottish Reformation, indeed, depended on resistance to the Regent, Mary of Guise, and

the Queen, Mary Stewart, for its very success. The intellectual milieu of the exile years and Knox's consultation with other Reformed ministers played no small part. Nor is it entirely accurate to view Knox's notions of opposition to rulers as entirely religious and nonpolitical. But nevertheless, Knox was a religious reformer and as such his resistance theory was largely a means to an end, the end being the reformation of religion in Scotland. To be sure, the Bible, especially the Old Testament, and the way Knox interpreted it, was the principal, but not only source of his theory of resistance.<sup>35</sup> Events and ideology notwithstanding, Knox's resistance theory could have little rational basis without his concepts of God, sin, idolatry, and the covenant. Most directly, John Knox's notion of political resistance was related to his belief in active resistance to sin. As Knox stated in his debate with Maitland, the faithful, when in a minority, are required only to separate themselves from idolatry. When in a dominant position and reasonably unified, however, they must not simply separate from idolatry—they must abolish it.<sup>36</sup> And if exterminating idolatry meant overthrowing a Catholic sovereign, then such action became necessary. For this active resistance to idolatry and its political consequences, Knox adduced considerable support from the Old Testament.<sup>37</sup>

Knox, indeed, adopted the role and rhetoric of an Old Testament prophet

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Resistance in the Political Theory of John Knox" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, Boston, 1960-61), p. 44; and to some extent Walzer. Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (New York: Atheneum, 1973), pp. 92-113. Those emphasizing Knox primarily as a political thinker isolated from his religious thought are: E. Russell, "John Knox as a Statesman," *The Princeton Theological Review*, VI (January 1908), pp. 1-28; J. H. Burns, "John Knox and the Revolution," *History Today*, VIII (August 1958), pp. 565-573. To some extent Ridley, Percy, and Little follow this latter position. See Ridley, *John Knox*, Percy, *John Knox*, and Paul M. Little, "John Knox and English Social Prophecy," *Presbyterian Historical Society of England*, XIV (1968-72), pp. 117-127.

<sup>35</sup> Vesey, "The Sources of Knox's Political Theory," pp. 47-227. The argument of Vesey's dissertation is that Knox derived his theory of resistance from the Old Testament.

<sup>36</sup> *Works*, II, pp. 442, 443.

<sup>37</sup> *Works*, III, pp. 165-216, 263-330; IV, pp. 377-402, 170, 234, 245; IV, pp. 377-402; 281, 472-473; II, pp. 372, 432-33; Vesey, "The Sources of Knox's Political Theory," pp. 47-227.

and may have even integrated his personality into that of a Hebrew prophet. His resistance theory rested predominantly on religious grounds but not exclusively. As Paul Little points out, Knox did not assail Mary Tudor solely as an idolatress, but displayed concern for the entire fabric of English Society. For example, in *A Faithful Admonition* (1554), he attacked her on the ground of endangering national independence.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, in transforming religion, Knox did not intend to bypass the existing political structure (e.g., monarch, nobility, estates). Rather he sought to animate the structure with a religious purpose. When Knox found no monarch to reform religion, he turned to the nobility. Only when the sovereign and the nobility failed to purify religion did Knox advocate going outside the structure. The Scottish Reformation intermingled religious and political motives, and though religion dominated Knox's thought, as a typical sixteenth-century man, he could not completely separate the two.

John Knox is well known for his theory of resistance against constituted authority. The exact date, however, when he held this theory is debated by historians. The traditional view, best represented by J. H. Burns, says Knox adhered to passive resistance until about 1558, when he became the apostle of armed resistance. This appears to be an overstatement. Knox waited until the spring of 1558 to explicitly reveal a full blown doctrine of resistance, but the foundation for his political thought had been laid by 1554 and perhaps even earlier.<sup>39</sup> Knox may have even revolted

in fact at St. Andrews (1547). *A Godly Letter* (1553-54) established that believers must separate from idolatry; that a people incurred corporate guilt for even tolerating idolatry; and that lesser magistrates could slay idolaters. Moreover, Knox's questions to Bullinger (1554) indicated that his thought was moving toward resistance. In *A Faithful Admonition* (1554), Knox prayed for God to overthrow a Catholic government, he appealed to English nationalism, and openly attacked the sovereign. *Letters to the Brethren* (1557) signaled the polemical outburst that was about to occur. Here Knox demanded that the nobility reform religion even in the face of royal opposition.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, Knox still had not made the radical break—he had not openly advocated popular rebellion or regicide.

This radical break came early in 1558 when John Knox wrote four revolutionary pamphlets. In the *First Blast* Knox said that it was against the law

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armed resistance. See J. H. Burns, "The Political Ideas of the Scottish Reformation," *Aberdeen University Review*, XXXIV (1955-56), pp. 251-269, especially 258; Burns, "John Knox and Revolution," pp. 108-116. Ronald Vander Molen says that while Knox issued no clear call for rebellion in 1554, his writings, by that time, certainly implied such, and were interpreted as seditious by Cox's Anglican group at Frankfurt. See Ronald J. Vander Molen, "Anglican Against Puritan: Ideological Origins during the Marian Exile," *Church History*, 42 (March 1973), pp. 54 ff. Richard Greaves contends that Knox demonstrated a practical belief in the right to rebellion as early as 1547. See Greaves, "John Knox, the Reformed Tradition, and the Development of Resistance Theory," pp. 1-31, especially 1-3, 14. Little and Ridley also seem to favor a date earlier than 1558. See Little, "Knox and English Social Prophecy," p. 117; Ridley, *John Knox*, pp. 171, 174.

<sup>40</sup> *Works*, I, pp. 177, 272; III, pp. 166, 168, 170, 175, 178, 184-188, 190-194, 221-226, 274, 275, 282, 283, 293, 308, 309; IV, pp. 262-286.

<sup>38</sup> *Works*, III, p. 295; Little, "John Knox and the English Social Prophecy," pp. 122-125.

<sup>39</sup> J. H. Burns believes that Knox held to passive obedience until 1558 when he advocated

of God, as well as of nature, for a woman to rule a kingdom. The inferiority and subjection of women to men were accepted both in theory and in practice in all ranks of society. Paradoxically, society considered women ineligible for any public office except that of head of state. In the *First Blast*, Knox exposed the illogical nature of this system, and in so doing, he attacked the special position of the crown. Knox's premise, that female rule had subverted both the divine and natural order, did not seem so startling. What alarmed Europe was his conclusion: The faithful, if afflicted by a female sovereign, "ought to remove from honor and authority that monster in nature," and if any support her they ought "execute against them the sentence of death."<sup>41</sup>

By the summer of 1558, Knox published three tracts putting forward his doctrine of revolution even more clearly. He wrote one to Mary of Guise, one to the nobility, and the third to the common people of Scotland, i.e., the middle class. In addition, he attached the abortive *Second Blast* to his last tract. In these works, Knox denounced Tynsdale's doctrine of Christian obedience as sinful. Most sixteenth-century theologians instructed the people to obey the king, not from fear of earthly punishment but from fear of God. Knox now reversed this. If the people obeyed unjust commands of evil rulers, they would receive a far more terrible punishment from God than any sovereign could inflict upon them for treason. In earlier works, Knox implied the right of resistance. He now imposed upon the nobility, estates, and the common people the duty of armed resistance to a Catholic sovereign.

In the four pamphlets published before August 1558, Knox set forth very clearly his views on the matter of government and the rights of subjects against oppressive and idolatrous rulers. He touched upon most of these matters in the *First Blast*, but spelled them out in the later letters. He first called upon the Queen Regent to reform the church. Then he followed with an appeal to the nobles to force such reforms and a summons to the commonalty to pressure the rulers toward the same end. He stated unequivocally that the nobles had the right to remove an unrepentant monarch, while the commonalty could set up their own "reformed church" if their rulers failed to act. After this 1558 outburst, Knox more or less elaborated upon or modified the same themes for the duration of his career.<sup>42</sup>

### Conclusion

We have examined the main motifs in the thought of John Knox. Though he did not systematize his religious beliefs nor his political ideas, he did address these subjects quite extensively. From the Knoxian corpus one can gain important information regarding his foundational beliefs and thoughts. The exact extent of Knox's influence on his contemporaries and posterity is a matter of debate, but there can be no doubt that his religious thought remains important enough to deserve serious treatment in itself. Along with Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, Heinrich Bullinger, Martin Bucer, Theodore Beza, and others, Knox was a leading figure of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. By general consensus, he was the main figure

<sup>41</sup> *Works*, IV, pp. 415, 416.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 469, 470, 485-487, 495-501, 505-507.

of the Scottish Reformation. The role that he played in the overthrow of Catholicism and the establishment of the Reformed faith should not be minimized.<sup>43</sup> If in all probability, Scotland would have had some form of refor-

<sup>43</sup> Henry Cowan, *John Knox, The Hero of the Scottish Reformation* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1905), p. 1; W. Stanford Reid, "John Knox and His Interpreters," *Renaissance and Reformation*, X (1974), pp. 21-23.

mation without Knox, nonetheless from him the Scottish Reformation received much of its definite character and direction.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> P. Hume Brown, *John Knox*, 2 Vols. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1895), Vol. I, p. 317; Ethelbert D. Warfield, "John Knox, Reformer of a Kingdom," *The Princeton Theological Review*, III (July 1905), p. 389; Henry Thomas Buckle, *On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 80.

These two sermons were preached in the regular Chapel Services of Miller Chapel during the Spring Semester 1983.

## It's You I'm Calling

Sermon by  
FREDA A. GARDNER

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Text: "Peter turned and saw following them the disciple whom Jesus loved, who had lain close to his breast at the supper and had said, 'Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?' When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, 'Lord, what about this man?' Jesus said to him, 'If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!'" (John 21:20-22)

IT MAY not be so for you but I am always a little surprised whenever I eavesdrop on children, and especially surprised each fall, when I eavesdrop on the children of North and South Halls playing together. Here are children from this country and around the world, at the beginning with no language in common—but, and this is my surprise, able to communicate in at least one way. Now I'm not going to try to speak in tongues to you but what those children say sounds a lot like, "Nah, Nah, Nah, Nah, Nah, Nah," "I'm gonna tell your mother," "My Dad's better than yours is." You recognize it?

It begins early in life—and there are endless variations on the theme:

How come she doesn't have to?  
You never make him do anything.  
I was the one who thought it up,  
so I should go first.

and then we "grow up" a little:

Why should I? No one else does.  
Why shouldn't I? Everyone else  
does.  
Other parents don't get on their  
kids for that.

And then we're grown up:

If anyone ever said thank you for  
dinner, I'd faint.

Why should I burn myself out?  
No one else does and no one  
cares.

I really knocked myself out—how  
come you gave—a higher grade,  
a promotion, a bonus, a hug?

How come? What about? I—him,  
her, THEM. I hear something of that  
in Peter's question, AND JESUS SAID  
... WHAT IS THAT TO YOU?  
FOLLOW ME.

Perhaps not then but maybe now it  
is easier for many to follow the star to  
Bethlehem than it is to walk the road  
of discipleship . . . to fall on one's knees  
before Mary's child than to keep fol-  
lowing a Jesus to Jerusalem and be-  
yond. Even in the midst of conflicting  
feelings about family and home, vaca-  
tion and values, it is often, in the end,  
easy to give oneself over to the great  
Christmas gift of hope—for peace and  
good will, for love and meaning—to let  
one's imagination and reflection center  
on that baby and the wonder of it all—

that the Almighty God could and would be born as a little child that we might know new birth.

But even here it begins very soon—who knew first, who first saw? Who brought which gifts? Does the lame young shepherd or the drummer boy or the littlest angel offer the best? Does it help if you're poor or sick? If you're rich *and* religious, that counts, doesn't it? If you're the family that prays together isn't that as good as being hospitable to just anyone? If you never steal big things doesn't that make up for someone's paperclips or pleasure or possibility? And if it's your mother who always pushes you into first place, is that your fault? If you give up forty thousand for the judicatory minimum, that's got to be worth something.

And besides—look at THEM—  
what about that one?  
WHAT IS THAT TO YOU?  
FOLLOW ME.

A little child, exploding through the door of a Church school classroom, looked up at a waiting parent and said, "Remember what I said I was going to be in the play?" "Yes," answered that parent, "you said you were a disciple." "Well," said the child, "they just didn't walk around after Jesus, you know, they got hard stuff to do."

To follow Jesus is to walk on one's own legs—sometimes with canes or crutches or in a wheelchair or in one's mind—into the desert—into a colorless, isolated, neutral place where either/or may be deceptively free of ambiguity or starkly ultimate or both; into temptations in which the good is not totally absent and what's faithful must be discerned through struggle.

To follow Jesus—seldom on an upward and onward path—frequently on

a path which winds and dips and loses itself in shadows. Karl Barth speaks of our calling in Christ as a stepping into the light and following often finds one ready to put a foot down—only to realize that the light and the path are slightly to the left or the right, necessitating a pause, hesitation, decision, and regaining of balance before moving into and on.

FOLLOW ME appears in Scripture as a general imperative spoken to particular people. Into the desert and on the way—each follows with particular gifts. I wonder if we have been taught too well about what we like to call talents and about myrrh and frankincense, little lambs and little songs—and maybe not well taught to think of gifts as capacities to perceive what others look at and miss, or our capacities to know without being told about what hurts or enslaves or kills the body and the spirit, or our capacities to care enough to act on what has been told; maybe not well enough taught in terms of educational and social opportunities—experiences which are no one's right but rightfully belong in the shaping of our discipleship. To God's people, Paul says, are given the gifts needed for the work of Christian service which is the substance of "follow me."

The path from the manger to cross (and beyond) is the path of Jesus' own direct facing of the sins and agonies of a tortured world; it is, sadly, in one sense, a path wide enough to allow each of us and all of Christ's disciples to follow . . . some with hands ready to lift up and support the fallen, some with arms outstretched to take in the refugees of life's power to wound, some with minds planning for the tearing down of systems which treat people as things, some with voices articulating the unspoken terrors of the voiceless, some

with food for the hungry or work for the unemployed, some absorbing the violence of the weak as a strong witness to peace.

And on the path, even when no one

looks around to see if she or he is first or better or the most—finding oneself in the community not made by our strivings to create it—but given in our following.

# We Have This Treasure

Sermon by

BERNHARD W. ANDERSON

*An alumnus of the Pacific School of Religion and a Ph.D. from Yale, Dr. Anderson served as Dean of the Theological School and Henry A. Buttz Professor of Biblical Theology at Drew University before joining the Princeton Seminary faculty in 1968 as Professor of Old Testament Theology. Though he formally retired in August 1982, he returned to teach at Princeton during the 1982-83 academic year. He is the author of several books, including Understanding the Old Testament, Creation versus Chaos, and Out of the Depths. This sermon was given on March 21, 1983, on the occasion of President McCord's introduction of Thomas Gillespie and his family to the seminary community.*

Text: *"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, 'I believed, and so I spoke,' we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God." (II Corinthians 4:3-15)*

## I

Years ago, when I was serving a church in Millbrae, California, and struggling every week with the question, "What shall I preach?" I came upon a book by Paul Scherer entitled *For We Have This Treasure*. The book, which contained the Yale Lectures in Preaching for 1943, made a great im-

pact upon me—not just because of its lively style and homiletical wisdom, but because it lured me into the embrace of great texts of Scripture.

One of those texts, suggested by the title of Scherer's book, is a passage from the Apostle Paul's correspondence to the Corinthian church: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to

God; and not to us" (II Cor. 4:7, RSV).

What has happened during the intervening years is that I have come to read that text in its context: the theological context of apostolic experience and the theological context in which we live as Christians today. Out of apostolic experience we hear the announcement of "the gospel of the glory of Christ"—a gospel so glorious that Paul re-sounds the notes of the Genesis creation story. He writes about Christ who is the *eikōn* (image) of God, who is the new 'adam (humanity); and Christ who is the beginning of a new creation. Echoing the first creative act in the creation story, the creation of light out of primeval darkness and chaos, Paul writes: "It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ."

This glorious gospel is too good to be true in our world which seems to be perilously near destruction, as though pre-creation chaos were about to return!

## II

If this were only the *announcement* of good news of the beginning of a new creation, the proper response would be incredulity, if not laughter. You must be kidding, Paul! That's a wonderful future that you are talking about—a new creation that corresponds to and fulfills the original creation; but it is not now—not now in "this mad, mad, mad world" where one had better have a sense of humor, otherwise things could easily get you down. But this gospel is more than an announcement—it is a *celebration* in the world as it is. Just sense the shock of this text: we have this treasure, this glorious gospel of the

new age, *now* in our human lives which are, as it were, earthenware pots.

At this point Paul uses a word related to *ostraca*—a term familiar to archaeologists. During an excavation of a biblical site an archaeologist unearths *ostraca* or "potsherds"—fragments of clay vessels that once held liquid, perhaps even a "treasure" like costly wine or fine ointment; and often these broken jars can be reconstructed to give evidence of life in a bygone period.

Frail and earthly we human beings are, made of dust and returning to dust, as our human nature is portrayed in the Paradise Story (Gen. 2:7; 3:19). And yet this *ostraca*-like human life that we live is the vessel that contains the reality of the new creation! Already in these frail vessels we know that light shines in darkness, that life is at work in death, that creation is overcoming chaos. And as an indication of the truth of this Paul goes on to give a whole litany of crisis situations. "We are in difficulties, but never cornered," as one translation puts it; "knocked down but never knocked out," as another continues—always embodying the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may be manifest in our bodily, corporate existence.

Surely we can tune in on this apostolic testimony out of our own experience. Could we not relate our own litany of dangers and crises as we think back over the experiences of this academic year? Indeed, our community has felt the shock-waves of sorrow in the student body, in the faculty, and in the administration—here I am thinking of individuals by name. We are frail human vessels, so delicate and so fragile, and yet vessels that contain the gospel of the new creation so that the transcendent power may belong to God, not to us!

Moreover, this is a year of transition for this seminary. It is the end of the era of President James McCord's leadership—a glorious period in which I rejoice to have participated—and the beginning of a new era under new leadership. Indeed, if I may use a Pauline expression, the *arrabon* ("foretaste") of that new era is given in the presence of President-elect Thomas Gillespie in this worship service. Also this is a year when a number of teachers are moving into retirement and when changes are in the offing—only to show that "time marches on." We are frail human vessels of clay, creatures limited by temporality; yet this seminary, this vessel, holds the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, showing that the transcendent power belongs to God, not to us.

### III

Can we really believe, can we really live this gospel of God's new creation in this world where the power of death is at work?

The other day newspapers carried the story of a band of scientists who journeyed from MIT to Washington, DC, to lend their support to the increasing demand for a nuclear weapons freeze. One of them (Victor Weisskopf), an architect of the atomic bomb, declared that a hundred years from now our present situation, in which the two great world powers have deployed 50,000 nuclear weapons around the world, will be regarded as "a mental disease." Of course, that is on the assumption that there will be enough people on the earth one hundred years from now to look back in philosophical reflection! We are living in an apocalyptic time; yet perhaps this is the time when we may hear the glorious gospel of Christ, with its

apocalyptic announcement of the breaking of a new creation, corresponding to God's creation "in the beginning." Death is at work in this world but, through Christ, the power of life is in you!

You are wondering, perhaps, how an Old Testament scholar, who has crossed the boundary into the New Testament to give this sermon, will turn to the Old Testament at the conclusion. Well, that's no problem because Paul does it—at the very climax of his exposition of the dawning of the new creation. Notice that he quotes Psalm 116: "Since we have the same spirit of faith as the one who wrote, 'I believed, and so I speak,' we too believe, and so we speak."

Psalm 116 is a song of thanksgiving to the God who delivers one from death which, like an encroaching imperial power, invades our world now, perhaps through sickness, bodily handicap, old age. Any weakening of our vitality may show the power of death at work in us now. Yet this psalmist testifies to that "amazing grace" which restores one's being, again and again.

Thou hast delivered my life  
from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling;  
I walk before Yahweh in the land  
of the living.

(Psalm 116:8-9)

The psalmist's endorsement of this testimony was translated, "I believe, and so I have spoken." Strikingly, Paul says that is "this same spirit of faith"—not an alien faith but the very faith of the psalmist that modulates from the minor key of lament in distress to the major key of thanksgiving—which we have in the corporate body of Christ.

## IV

To believe in and to celebrate the new creation that God has initiated in Jesus Christ is not only to receive divine comfort in all our human sufferings—that is part of it, thank God! We are involved in a great pageant of triumph, far greater than our individual lives, and there is nothing—literally nothing—that can separate us from the love of God and the faithfulness of God made known through Jesus Christ. But even more, the gospel is an invitation to take part in the new creation—to stand on those “beachheads of God’s dawning new world in the midst of the old world” about which my colleague, Chris Beker,

has written in his book on the Apostle Paul, so that these clay vessels of ours may be the instruments of God in the triumph of life over death, of creation over chaos.

In that book which I mentioned at the beginning, Paul Scherer ends the first chapter entitled “A Constant Pageant” [of Triumph] by quoting, as did Paul, the verse from Psalm 116, a song of thanksgiving: “I too believe and so I speak.” And so should every sermon end: and so should every chapter of life end in the Christian community of faith.

“Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord!”

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RONALD H. CRAM

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DORIS DONNELLY

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KARLFRIED FROEHLICH

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Book of Joshua*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, by Marten H. Woudstra. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1981. Pp. xiv + 396. \$16.95.

One must characterize Woudstra's commentary on Joshua as a programmatically "conservative" work. He explicitly operates with the inerrantist's division of scholarship into two mutually hostile camps, divided by an unbridgeable chasm of mutually unacceptable presuppositions. His basic approach is well stated in a footnote to his discussion of the authorship and date of the book: "This commentary has been written from the standpoint of the Bible's basic reliability. This standpoint springs from faith in the Bible's own claims, and is not as such subject to external verification" (p. 9, n. 15). He is not opposed to historical and archaeological arguments, but they are really unnecessary, since he can make historical judgments on the basis of his theological presuppositions.

It is not surprising, then, that Woudstra slights the archaeological evidence bearing on the book of Joshua. He is very critical of von Rad's willingness to operate with two different understandings of history that are often in conflict: modern "scientific" history and Israel's own understanding of their history. Yet Woudstra and his ideological colleagues are actually more ahistorical in their theology than von Rad, because the only history they recognize is a dogmatically constructed history, not requiring historical evidence for its acceptance. As one might guess, Woudstra accepts the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Moreover, he attributes the book of Joshua to the time of Joshua himself and regards it as a unified work, apparently of a single author. This stance leads to a fairly predictable, harmonistic interpretation of individual passages that does little to advance either scholarship or the quest of faith seeking understanding.

The book has a good bibliography, and in his treatment of individual passages Woudstra gives copious references to the relevant scholarly literature, both "liberal" and "conservative." This is probably the most positive aspect of the book. Unless one is a "conservative" looking for a "conservative" commentary to bolster one's faith, one will probably be disappointed in the other aspects of this volume. Unlike J. A. Thompson's

treatment of Jeremiah in an earlier volume of this series, Woudstra's exposition of Joshua loses its credibility for the larger Christian, not to say scholarly, community by its utter dependency on "conservative" dogma.

J. J. M. ROBERTS

*Justice and History in the Old Testament: The Evolution of Divine Retribution in the Historiographies of the Wilderness Generation*, by Richard Adamiak. John T. Zubal, Inc., Cleveland, OH, 1982. Pp. xii + 103. \$12.95.

Though at times painfully terse, Richard Adamiak's short monograph on the Old Testament's historiographical evaluation of the wilderness period is both interesting and suggestive. It is also highly controversial. He begins in his introductory chapter by offering ten hypotheses, which he then tries to establish in the succeeding chapters of the book.

There is not space in this review to discuss each of these hypotheses in detail, but Adamiak's main points may be summarized as follows. There is a systematic and consistent view of divine retribution in the old epic source JE, which can also be demonstrated to exist in the separate source J. This view is based on the Sinaitic Covenant which makes the unconditional promise of the land to the Patriarchs conditional. According to JE the wilderness generation was unfaithful, but it was representatively punished by the punishment of some; those who entered Canaan were not the innocent remnant, but the guilty remnant. This view of the wilderness period was the source for both the structure and the contents of the Deuteronomic theology. In contrast to the rather negative evaluation of the wilderness period reflected in JE and the Deuteronomic theology, the pre-exilic prophets and Psalter gave it a positive evaluation. Only in the exilic and post-exilic period was the wilderness period again evaluated in a negative light, and then with a growing concern for individual in contrast to collective retribution.

The somewhat narrow basis for Adamiak's position that JE had a systematic and consistent theory of divine retribution based on the Sinaitic

Covenant is the observation that the murmuring motif is treated differently before and after the Sinai account. Prior to the giving of the covenant in the Sinai pericope Israel is never punished when she murmurs. After the Sinai pericope Israel's murmuring normally provokes a divine judgment. The difference, according to Adamiak, must be the obligation imposed by Israel's acceptance of the covenant. While the observation of the different treatment of the murmuring motif before and after the Sinai pericope is interesting, one may question whether it can bear the weight Adamiak puts on it, particularly given the complexity of the literary composition of this material. One may be justified in questioning whether JE is even responsible for the present arrangement of this material in this fashion.

One may also question Adamiak's thesis that the first Deuteronomic theologian (Dt) identified the generation that entered Canaan with the generation that left Egypt, while the second Deuteronomic editor (Dtr) had that first generation perish in the wilderness. He achieves this distinction by a rather dubious literal interpretation of the homiletical language of Deuteronomy and the assignment of all troublesome material to the second editor. Thus in Joshua 5:1-8 he distinguishes between pre-deuteronomic, Dt, and Dtr material, but since the criteria for separating the editorial levels is the very distinction he is trying to demonstrate, the argument is circular.

Similar objections may be raised to his treatment of the pre-exilic prophets. That Jeremiah does not allude to Sinai or to the covenant is defensible, if at all, only by attributing troublesome passages to Deuteronomic redaction. Moreover, one may question whether Adamiak has given sufficient weight to the figure of Hosea, an apparent exception and therefore a troubling figure for Adamiak's thesis.

Perhaps had he allowed himself more scope for developing his theses, Adamiak could have answered some of the doubts critics are sure to raise about his claims. Perhaps not. In any case the volume is very stimulating and, whether ultimately convincing or not, well worth careful study.

J. J. M. ROBERTS

*Psalms 1-50*, Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 19, by Peter C. Craigie. Word Books, Waco, TX, 1983. Pp. 378. \$18.95.

Peter Craigie, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada, author of several books, numerous articles, and editor of the important *Newsletter for Ugaritic Studies*, is one of the most noted "evangelical" Old Testament scholars in North America. This commentary, however, can neither be praised nor dismissed as simply an "evangelical" commentary. It is a sober, scholarly commentary of great merit that will prove useful to anyone trying to gain a better understanding of the Psalms.

The commentary contains a relatively brief (only about 25 pages), but judicious and informative introduction to the Psalms, a detailed exegetical treatment of Psalms 1-50, three excurses, and various indexes: authors cited, principal subjects, biblical texts, Ugaritic texts, key Hebrew words, and Ugaritic words. The actual commentary on the individual psalms follows the general format adopted by this commentary series, but adapted to the particular demands of the book of Psalms. Following a very helpful listing of recent bibliography, Craigie offers his own translation of the psalm. Then there is a section entitled "Notes" in which he discusses text critical and technical philological issues. This is followed by a section devoted to the form, structure, and setting of the psalm, another section entitled "Comment" that contains the actual verse by verse exegesis, and a final section entitled "Explanation" that discusses the significance of the psalm as a whole. The three excurses concern the meaning of *selah*, the translation of Hebrew verb tenses, and the acrostic psalms.

Craigie confesses a great indebtedness to Dahood's pioneering introduction of Ugaritic into the study of the Psalms, but Craigie's own use of this comparative material is far more restrained and self-critical. His discussion of the use of Ugaritic in his introduction is a model of sobriety, and in the detailed exegetical work on the individual psalms he maintains this critical concern for sound methodology. The happy result is that the many valid insights from Ugaritic or other comparative material invoked in the explication of the text are not discredited by an excessive and uncritical "pan-Ugariticism."

Craigie recognizes that such psalms as 2, 22, and 45, which were given a messianic interpretation in early Christianity, acquired that significance only on the basis of a "second" reading, and he insists on interpreting these psalms on the basis of their original setting and meaning before moving to a discussion of the legitimacy

of the messianic reading. His interpretation of the original meaning of these psalms as a coronation psalm, an individual lament with liturgical dimensions, and a wedding song are generally convincing, and his further reflections on the transition from these original meanings to the later messianic reading is often very helpful for a theological appropriation of the text.

There are numerous places where other scholars will disagree with Craigie's conclusions, of course. His translation is not always felicitous, his textual criticism is sometimes too cautious in preferring a dubious or impossible MT reading to any emendation (Psalm 2:11b-12a is such a case, at least in this reviewer's opinion), and occasionally he tries to balance two mutually exclusive views, which blurs the clarity of his own exposition. These criticisms, however, are necessarily subjective, and they are not common or pervasive enough to seriously dampen this reviewer's enthusiasm for Craigie's commentary. He has set a very high standard for this new commentary series, and one can only hope that Marvin C. Tate and Leslie C. Allen, who are responsible for the other two volumes on the Psalms in this series, do as well. If Craigie's volume is any indication of things to come, this is a major commentary series that the working pastor might well consider worth the investment.

J. J. M. ROBERTS

*From Chaos to Covenant. Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah*, by Robert P. Carroll. Crossroad, New York, NY, 1981. Pp. viii + 344. \$14.95.

Scholarship has its fads. A short time ago it was fashionable to find wisdom influence everywhere in the Old Testament literature. The current fad seems to be to find the hands of the deuteronomistic school everywhere. In contemporary Old Testament scholarship the deuteronomistic redactors have become the most creative, prolific, and omnipresent literary force in the whole canonical process. This work by Carroll belongs to this contemporary trend and pushes it beyond the realm of credibility.

Old Testament scholars have long recognized that there was deuteronomistic influence on the book of Jeremiah. Mowinckel's so-called C-source, composed primarily of prose sermons attributed

to the prophet, is filled with deuteronomistic clichés. No scholar of any significance questioned that point; the question was rather how much of Jeremiah's original message lay embedded in this deuteronomistic prose. Some answered that Jeremiah himself wrote in the deuteronomistic prose of his day, others that deuteronomistic redactors edited original sermons of Jeremiah, preserving the essence of what he said in their own idiom, and yet others argued that the deuteronomistic redactors simply created prose sermons for Jeremiah that reflected their own theology while having little to do with the thought of the earlier prophet.

Carroll belongs to this last group, but he goes even farther than his predecessors. He attributes not only the C-source to the deuteronomistic redactors, he also gives them the credit for making up the so-called B-source, or Baruch-source. There was no Baruch according to Carroll. Jeremiah's faithful scribe was just the figment of the deuteronomistic redactors' literary imagination, created to serve their theological bias. Carroll's historical skepticism is apparently boundless. While others have suggested that the old law book "discovered" in the temple in Josiah's reign was actually written for the occasion and planted in the temple by the advocates of the deuteronomistic reform, Carroll goes even further. No such event ever happened. The whole story is a pure literary fiction. There was no law book either found or planted in the temple. The deuteronomistic redactors were also responsible for the various symbolic acts Jeremiah is reported to have performed as well as for his comments about the Judean kings contemporary with him. Surprisingly Jeremiah is allowed to remain an historical personage, but he remains largely inaccessible to the modern reader. Carroll also dismisses the call narrative and the laments of Jeremiah as the product of the deuteronomistic school.

It is difficult to argue with anyone who wants to reconstruct history in this fashion, but several observations can be made. It is not self-evident that material as stylistically distinct as Mowinckel's C- and B-sources can be assigned to the same deuteronomistic redactors. To do so requires a far more detailed stylistic comparison than Carroll devotes to the subject. By his rather vague description of theological similarities one could attribute almost anything in the Old Testament, not to mention other Near Eastern texts, to this school. Carroll points to some real theological difficulties in the book of Jeremiah, but it is not at all clear why these difficulties must

stem from the deuteronomistic redactors and not from Jeremiah himself. The problem of how to distinguish between a true and false prophet was never satisfactorily resolved in the Old Testament, but to argue that that issue was more important in the exilic period than in the period prior to 587 B.C. is absurd. In Jeremiah's day it was an existential issue as there were conflicting prophetic voices clamoring for the attention of the people. After the exile the whole prophetic enterprise seems to have been discredited. The rage against the false prophets in the book of Jeremiah is far more likely to stem from the impotence Jeremiah felt when his contemporaries followed such scoundrels, than from a similar feeling on the part of the deuteronomistic redactors when they looked back on long dead and discredited adversaries.

To put it bluntly, one can hardly avoid the suspicion that the deuteronomistic redactors function for Carroll as a kind of trash compactor for the disposal of all the Jeremianic material he finds theologically objectionable. That is most of the book. Thus, despite many acute individual observations, the volume as a whole is disappointing. Contrary to the dust jacket, the resultant picture is almost totally negative. Moreover, Carroll's blatant disdain for preachers, particularly Protestant preachers, however justified in part, remains offensive, and his extreme view of the basic irrelevance of the Bible for contemporary life will be convincing to few.

J. J. M. ROBERTS

*The Archaeology of the Land of Israel*, by Yohanan Aharoni, Editor: Miriam Aharoni. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1982. Pp. 344. \$27.50 (hardcover), \$18.95 (paper).

This survey of the archaeological data from the land of Israel has many virtues. There have been few attempts at a synthesis of the results of excavation and this volume is a welcome complement to the classic but now outdated survey by W. F. Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (1949), and Kathleen Kenyon's *Archaeology in the Holy Land* (1960), to which it is similar in format. Aharoni brings to this study a lifetime of archaeological experience, and his own work at Beer-sheba, Arad, and Ramat Rahel figures prominently in his discussion and historical re-

construction. In this respect, Aharoni's survey is a particularly useful supplement to Kenyon's work with its emphasis on Jericho, Samaria, and Jerusalem, the sites of her own principal excavation activity. Aharoni's untimely death in 1976 prevented him from completing the work which was edited by Miriam Aharoni. The original publication was in Modern Hebrew (1978) and Anson F. Rainey, a close colleague of Aharoni, has rendered a very valuable service in translating this work into English.

Israeli archaeology has tended to emphasize the exposure of architecture in excavation, and discussion of architectural remains is central to Aharoni's treatment. In the interpretative process Aharoni emphasizes the evidence of the Biblical text alongside other written documents from the ancient Near East. Two brief chapters provide a lucid survey of the Prehistoric Era and the Chalcolithic Period. A longer chapter is devoted to the Canaanite Period (Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Age) while the long final chapter is devoted to the period of Israelite settlement down to 587 B.C.E., the period of his major interest. The designations Eretz-Israel and Land of Israel used throughout define clearly the focus of his interest, the territory of Ancient Israel, particularly, the territory controlled by David and Solomon. This designation, as he himself recognized, is, however, anachronistic for much of the period under discussion.

It is in his discussion of the Bronze and Iron Age materials that Aharoni will engender the most controversy. His treatment of the Early Bronze Age emphasizes the important materials from Arad where excavations have revealed a substantial Early Bronze Age city with clear evidence of town planning. No small service is rendered by making these materials accessible to a broad audience. The author's reticence in labeling architecture "temple" or "sanctuary" without clear evidence of cultic usage is commendable. On the question of the date and nature of Israel's settlement in the land, Aharoni stresses the unique character of the Israelite settlement with its concentration in those marginal areas which had not been intensely settled previously. His reconstruction depends heavily on an analysis of the sites in Upper Galilee and in the Negeb, especially Tel Masos in the Negeb, which he identified as biblical Hormah. The process of settlement was complex, beginning about 1400 in the northern hill country with the settlement in the Negeb beginning somewhat later, extending from the thirteenth to the end of the eleventh century. Aharoni's interpretation

will require modification in light of increasing knowledge of patterns of settlement in this area. Among other things, Aharoni denied that there was Late Bronze Age occupation in the Negeb. Excavations at Tell Halif, a site at the northern edge of the Negeb, which were begun only months after Aharoni's death, have revealed substantial Late Bronze Age occupation. Surveys in central and southern Jordan are also changing our perception of the patterns of settlement there.

Aharoni challenges the accepted interpretation of the Solomonic period at Megiddo. Yadin, on the basis of soundings, had argued for a casemate wall associated with the Solomonic gateway. Aharoni does not see evidence of a casemate wall associated with that gateway and he makes a similar judgment about the situation at Gezer. The result of Aharoni's position is that Solomon must be viewed as building both solid and casemate walls. The weight of evidence here seems to lie with Aharoni's rival, Yadin. Aharoni also differs with Yadin and others in his interpretation of the so-called stables at Megiddo as storage facilities. Noting Pritchard's objections to the identification as stables, he goes on to argue from the evidence of storage jars and grinding implements in a similar structure at Beer-sheba that the Beer-sheba building, and hence the buildings of this type at Hazor and Megiddo, must be interpreted as storage facilities. John S. Holladay, however, has objected to this interpretation of the data, and interprets the materials in the Beer-sheba building as evidence of squatters taking shelter in the fortified city in a time of crisis.

The absence of systematic discussion of methodological issues limits the usefulness of this book for the introductory level student. In particular, the student must be wary of the way in which Aharoni uses biblical evidence for interpreting the archaeological data. Here his judgments tend to be speculative and the reasoning at times tends to be circular. For example, the well excavated at Beer-sheba must be the well ascribed to the patriarchs in the Bible (Gen. 21:25), and since this well was dug during the period of the conquest, it is necessary to conclude that the patriarchal narratives associated with Beer-sheba are to be dated to the period of the conquest. The absence of any footnotes and the very limited bibliography further limits the usefulness of this book to student and scholar alike. The changing perspectives on methodology and the broadening of objectives among archaeologists, including Israeli archaeologists, means that

this book is perhaps more useful as a witness to the past achievement of Israeli archaeology than as an indication of future direction.

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*The Rendering of God in the Old Testament*, by Dale Patrick. Fortress Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1981. Pp. xxv + 148. \$8.95 (paper).

In this book Dale Patrick approaches biblical theology in a novel way. His thesis may be briefly stated as follows. The Old Testament as literature portrays or renders God as a literary character. This characterization is convincing enough to evoke a literary identity; God is a character with specific personal traits, a personal history, and a definable nature. This identity is created and maintained with a striking consistency throughout the Old Testament; it is a canonical identity. Finally, Patrick moves from the nature of God's literary characterization and its canonical consistency to the affirmation that this literary rendering *confirms* the reality of the God evoked. Since this new form of the ontological argument for God is the crux of his argument, perhaps one should quote Patrick at this point:

Yahweh's identity confirms the reality of his presence. A God who existed only in our imagination could not be entertained in our imagination. . . . Yahweh must be inexhaustible to be the character that he is. For this God to be present in a given moment in time at a given place and to participate in a given action, he must be present in every time and place and participate in every action. When we encounter him as present in the literature, we are encountering one who exists in reality (p. 120).

This reviewer finds the argument interesting, but less than convincing. It is not clear to me why the same argument could not be made on the basis of Mesopotamian or Ugaritic literature for Marduk or Baal or any other of a dozen gods. For the ancient Mesopotamian or Canaanite these gods had distinct personalities, etc., and when we enter into their literature sympathetically, we can entertain these divine figures as literary characters, but does that prove their existence in the non-literary world of reality? Perhaps others will find the argument more

persuasive, but I find the strength of this little book in its description of the way in which the Old Testament portrays God. That that portrayal evokes a genuine reality external to the literature I believe, but the portrayal itself is hardly sufficient proof for that belief.

J. J. M. ROBERTS

*Studying the New Testament*, by Morna D. Hooker. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, MN, 1982. Pp. 224. Np.

*The Four Gospels and Acts: A Short Introduction*, by Harry R. Boer. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1982. Pp. 112. \$3.95.

These two volumes pursue, via contrasting approaches, the common aim of introducing the beginning student to the New Testament writings. In *Studying the New Testament* (first published in 1979 by Epworth Press), Morna Hooker guides the reader to a deepened understanding of each book of the New Testament by means of a concise exegetical commentary on selected passages. She provides only occasional mention of matters of New Testament introduction (authorship, dating, purpose, etc.) and socio-historical background, since a companion volume by W. David Stacey (*Groundwork of Biblical Studies*) addresses these questions. Harry Boer, on the other hand, focuses his *The Four Gospels and Acts: A Short Introduction* upon issues of introduction and background. The author outlines the structure of each of the gospels and Acts but includes no exegesis.

Hooker's opening chapter unfolds the meaning of "gospel"; her point of entry is the Pauline "gospel-summaries" (Rom. 1:3f.; I Cor. 15:1-8) and the prologues of the four gospels. Subsequent chapters are devoted to Mark (two chapters), Matthew, Luke, Acts, Paul as apostle, Paul as pastor, Paul as theologian, other letters, John, and Revelation. Chapter 12 (Revelation) concludes with a brief but excellent discussion of unity and diversity in the New Testament. For the most part, the commentary on selected passages is perceptive and to the point. Not surprisingly (in view of the author's previous work on the Son of man in Mark), Hooker's most comprehensive treatment is of Mark. Her attention to irony in the Markan narrative and to the evangelist's skillful use of the technique of "sandwiching" (intercalation) of scenes contrib-

utes to an especially interesting introduction to the gospel. The author presents a sound exposition of themes in Paul's letters, showing sensitivity to the importance of concrete situations in the Pauline churches for an understanding of Paul's theology. The chapter on John is exceptionally good; among its strengths is the careful attention given to the role that debate with the synagogue played in the composition of the Fourth Gospel. Throughout her book, Hooker advises the reader that New Testament passages are properly read, not as history or biography, but rather as theological statements. With unwavering exegetical sense, she de-emphasizes side-issues of historicity (without ignoring them altogether) in order to direct the reader to the theological point being made by the New Testament writer.

Four problematic features of this book should be noted, however. First, the author does not provide, except in the case of Matthew, a coherent presentation of the distinctive setting, themes, and perspective of each of the gospels and Acts. As a result, although many keen observations of this kind are scattered throughout the commentary, they are never gathered together for the reader. Second, Hooker's postponement of the discussion of the Fourth Gospel until chapter 11 means that I John is considered before, and in isolation from, the Gospel of John. Third, such writings as Ephesians, I and II Peter, the Pastorals, and Revelation receive much too cursory a treatment. Fourth, the chapter on Revelation fails to place that writing in the religio-historical context of apocalyptic and does not give sufficient attention to the social setting that shaped the document.

Harry Boer has written a compact, lucid, and moderately priced book that is well-suited for use in adult classes of the local church. Like Hooker, he begins his study with a chapter on the meaning of "gospel." After a chapter on Palestine in the time of Jesus, the author treats, in turn, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Before turning to John (chapter 8), Boer pauses, first, to reflect on the limitations and contribution of higher criticism, and then (chapter 7), to discuss the Synoptic Problem (i.e., the relationships among the first three gospels). Finally, the author describes the Roman world (chapter 9) in order to provide background for his concluding chapter on Acts. *The Four Gospels and Acts* has several positive features, three of which merit attention here. The discussion of the Synoptic Problem offers a helpful summary of the issues. Moreover, Boer presents an excellent summary

of the relationship between John and the Synoptics (pp. 68-71). The consideration of "higher criticism" reflects a conservative stance, yet advocates cautious use of critical methods. Boer is to be commended for making a serious effort to introduce the lay reader to the impact of critical methodologies on biblical study, even if he does view these methods with excessive skepticism.

Nevertheless, this little book has numerous weaknesses. First, although no bibliographical references are included, it is clear that recent scholarship has been neglected. Second, the absence of bibliographical aids (not a problem in Hooker's book) is itself a serious limitation: the beginning student of the New Testament deserves to be directed to the most valuable resources for further study. Third, the disproportionate space claimed by questions of authorship (invariably answered in favor of the traditional view) could mislead the reader into over-estimating the significance of such questions for the interpretation of New Testament writings. Fourth, the sequence of topics is puzzling: the chapters on Matthew, Mark, and Luke presuppose material that is not introduced until the succeeding chapters on higher criticism and the Synoptic Problem. Fifth, the problem of the relationship between Paul and Acts is brushed aside. Sixth and finally, the author's devaluation of redaction criticism, reflected in his treatment of the Synoptics, suggests that his overriding concern is to harmonize the gospel accounts, rather than to allow full interpretive force to their diversity.

Unfortunately, both books contain numerous misspellings and misprints. Most serious is a transposition of lines and omission of material in Hooker, p. 181, which renders the paragraph obscure. Nonetheless, Morna Hooker's *Studying the New Testament* is to be recommended highly for the beginning New Testament student in the local church because of its exegetical acumen and clear presentation. Harry Boer's *The Four Gospels and Acts: A Short Introduction* exhibits a greater number of weaknesses, yet many pastors will also find it to be a useful tool for Bible study at the elementary level. This reviewer can only hope that other scholars will, like Hooker and Boer, continue to distill the best insights of modern biblical scholarship and make them accessible to the lay reader.

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*The Profile Method for Classifying and Evaluating Manuscript Evidence as Applied to the Continuous Greek Text of the Gospel of Luke*, by Frederick Wisse. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1982. Pp. xi + 140. \$17.00.

The very great number of New Testament manuscripts makes the task of citing and evaluating their evidence in text-critical studies a perplexing problem. Since it is not practicable, for example, to cite individually all of the three thousand minuscule Greek manuscripts, or all of the two thousand Greek lectionary manuscripts (even supposing that the manuscripts belonging to either group were fully collated), scholars have made many attempts to identify representative texts. Long ago it was observed that certain manuscripts share certain combinations of variant readings. From this circumstance it is natural to conclude that they are somehow related to one another, probably as descendants of one or more parent manuscripts which contained those readings. The problem is how best to identify and classify this evidence so as to select a balanced representation of the entire manuscript tradition.

Wisse's monograph, which embodies (with modifications) his doctoral dissertation presented in 1968 to the Claremont Graduate School, begins with a discussion of the role played by New Testament minuscule manuscripts. Because of their late date and large number, minuscules are often given only secondary consideration in textual analyses. Contending that they deserve to receive greater attention than has been customary, Wisse sets forth what he calls the profile method, developed in order to assist scholars (a) in testing rapidly all known groups of New Testament manuscripts, (b) in discerning their most representative members, and (c) in evaluating the significance of the text of manuscripts that do not fall into any known group. Beginning with those groups of manuscripts that have been tentatively identified by other scholars, Wisse makes a selection of test readings in Luke to help determine which of the units of variation in a passage have a high degree of probability of showing group affiliation. Manuscripts then can be profiled by observing their agreements with chosen variants against the *Textus Receptus*. The qualifications that Wisse sets for a group are a large degree of internal agreement among members and a group profile

that differs significantly from profiles of other proposed groups. On the basis of an examination of data from three chapters in Luke (1, 10, and 20), the author sets forth his analyses in comprehensive lists with charts that classify the manuscripts and show the groups and clusters.

As can be appreciated from even a brief summary, this monograph is worthy of its inclusion as volume 44 in the distinguished series of "Studies and Monographs," founded half a century ago by Kirsopp and Silva Lake, and now continued under the editorship of Irving Alan Sparks.

BRUCE M. METZGER

*John*, by Fred B. Craddock. John Knox Press, Atlanta, GA, 1982. Pp. ii + 149. \$4.95.

To those who would ask "Why another book on John?" Fred B. Craddock answers from the stance of teaching both preaching and New Testament. Writing in the series of *Knox Preaching Guides* edited by John H. Hayes, he interweaves paraphrase of portions of the Fourth Gospel with scholarly discussion and strategies for preaching. In no sense is the result homiletical pabulum. Rather the work is a catalyst to assist in preparation for proclamation. The preacher is given substantive guidance rather than a battering with a barrage of issues more appropriate to the seminar room than the pulpit of the parish church.

An introduction seeks to motivate the preacher by pointing out that the Gospel of John is really an example of early Christian preaching. Aside from a valuable section on the prologue, the body of the work is divided into two parts. Jesus' ministry is described as a revelation of God (1:19-12:50). Instead of basing the interpretation of the Gospel on the "signs source," the theme of "witness" is considered to be fundamental. So we learn of the witness of John the Baptist, and the witness of Jesus in his itinerant ministry in Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, particularly in Jerusalem where he engages in conflicts. Finally, there is a witness in the events leading to his death.

The second major section (13:1-20:31) portrays Jesus as the revelation of God in his return to glory, as expressed in the farewell discourses, the passion story, and the resurrection accounts. The epilogue in chapter 21 shows that even the church had a post-Easter decline, yet found itself

in a Lord who was followed and in the food that was shared.

In dealing with John 1:1-18 it is suggested that it represents a basis for a series of sermons. The prologue testifies to the Johannine church's experience of Jesus in a faith that confesses in him the very presence of God. There is also in the prologue a poetic sense that awakens readers to deeper meanings, a polemical sense amid rivalries with the followers of John the Baptist and the Jewish synagogue, and finally a theological foundation for the remainder of the Gospel, centering on the activity of God through the Word that creates, redeems, and sustains. As well, the prologue brings into focus the whole scope of faith including ethical values, human and natural resources, social and political relationships, and the fullness of personal life, because then as now competing claims are being made for the minds and hearts of the believers.

At a time when "born again" theologies are popular, Craddock advises a careful reading of John 3:1-21. The scene is set; two teachers are engaged in dialogue, each having a different view of the Kingdom. New birth to Jesus means to be born from above. To Nicodemus it means being born again. The passage reflects the debate between the church and the synagogue, as well as the meaning of baptism and the Holy Spirit. In sum the passage is a message on the radical character of the grace of God, rather than on egocentrism as the way to build the Kingdom. New life in Christ is a gift, because abundant and eternal life is from above.

Without indulging in "parallelomania" Craddock continually shows the relationship between the ancient record and present problems. He has given us a highly readable book which abounds in helpful guidance for preaching today. A brief bibliography is included with suggestions for further reading. To the list of works cited should be added *The Gospel According to John* in three volumes by Rudolf Schnackenburg, perhaps not available in English translation at the time of the printing of Craddock's book.

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*Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education*, by Jack L. Seymour and Donald E. Miller with Sara P. Little, Charles R. Foster, Allen J. Moore, and Carol A. Wehrheim. Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, 1982. Pp. 175. \$6.95 (paper).

In *Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education*, Jack L. Seymour (assistant professor at Scarritt College), Donald E. Miller (professor of Christian Education and Ethics, Bethany Theological Seminary), and others examine five interpenetrating approaches to Christian education: religious instruction, faith community, spiritual development, liberation, and interpretation. Seymour asserts that each of these approaches uses a different metaphor. Respectively, they are education, community of faith, person, justice, and meaning. The stage is thus set for the purpose and content of the book. In Seymour's words:

In this particular study, we will examine the key metaphors that have been used to define the aim and purpose of Christian education throughout its history. Secondly, we will explore questions about the role of the teacher, the nature of the learner, and the context within which Christian education takes place (p. 16).

According to a précis of chapter one, these tasks are undertaken to the end that

a better understanding of the perspectives by which Christian education is being organized will contribute to shaping a more comprehensive and coherent theory and practice of Christian education. The hope is that this volume will stimulate dialogue among Christian educators as to the future shape of the discipline (p. 11).

The book contains seven chapters. An introduction to the issues addressed in the book is provided by Seymour in chapter one. In chapter two, Sara Little invites the reader to critically explore the religious instruction approach. In a lucid manner, she provides one interpretation of religious instruction with a brief but dynamic discussion of "appropriation" and "re-creation." Charles R. Foster offers a critical discussion on the faith community as a guiding image for Christian education in chapter three. In chapter four, Donald Miller provides a stimulating discussion of the relationship between developmental theory and Christian education. In what

could be the finest chapter in the book, Allen J. Moore critically introduces the reader to the topic of "Liberation and the Future of Christian Education." This topic, developed as chapter five, will no doubt become the cynosure of myriad discussions of the role of Christian education in social transformation. In chapter six, Jack Seymour and Carol Wehrheim engage in discussion on the topic of hermeneutics. The last chapter, by Miller and Seymour, is a brief summary of many of the problems and hopes raised in the course of the book.

That Christian educators have been provided with some thought-provoking essays by leaders in the discipline cannot be denied. Whether or not this study has been one primarily concerned with the examination of key metaphors that have been used to define the aim and purpose of Christian education throughout its history, however, is questionable. The issue is posed most obviously in chapters one and seven. In a summary chart in chapter one (pp. 32-33), the approaches and educational issues are summarized (rather imperfectly reflecting essay data), but no mention of metaphor is made. In chapter seven, one might be led to conclude that the approaches themselves are guiding metaphors (p. 153). To be more precise, Burgess (1975) has already demonstrated the usefulness of general *theological* and *theoretical* approaches to Christian educational analysis. All that is really known of the approaches used in this book is that they are *contemporary*. The ambiguity in the definition of approach might lead one to ask, "Is there any difference between 'approach,' 'concept,' 'theory,' and 'metaphor'?" It is, moreover, doubtful if the metaphors suggested by Seymour in chapter one accurately reflect the book's essays. In short, if metaphor is so important in the definition of the aim and purpose of Christian education, what is the *definition* of metaphor being used, and what is the *method* of its determination?

In spite of these issues, the selections that comprise the book are sound and suggestive. It was the hope of the book to stimulate dialogue regarding the future of Christian education; in this it has succeeded. The book is a welcomed addition to the ongoing discussion of Christian education theory and practice, and will no doubt become a standard text for use in introductory Christian education theory courses as a point of lively discussion on the future of the discipline.

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*Vision and Character: A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg*, by Craig R. Dykstra. Paulist Press, New York and Ramsey, 1981. Pp. viii + 160. \$5.95 (paper).

Craig R. Dykstra's argument in his *Vision and Character* is that, because moral education and moral growth advocated by Lawrence Kohlberg have little to contribute to religious education, there is a need to find the alternative foundation on which to operate, and this he does. Written for Christian religious educators, the book presents "visional ethics" as the alternative perspective to "juridical ethics" in its kohlbergian form. The basic sections of the book are: I. Criticism, II. Alternative Foundations, and III. Education.

Three points mark his disagreement with Kohlberg. First, the definition of "justice" is too narrow. Kohlberg contends that "justice is a universal mode of choosing which we want all people to adopt in all situations" (p. 12). For Dykstra, it is not that when someone understands the rule he or she knows what it means to be just. The "knowledge of justice," he says, "which is more than a knowledge of how to adjudicate the claims of competing parties, presupposes experiences that we have only through great discipline and great risk. It may also presuppose a certain relationship to God and to the world" (p. 13). The point he makes is that most of the situations that make up our moral lives are of the intersubjective rather than the objective kind which is supposed to be exhausted in Kohlberg's most developed understanding of justice (stage 6). Secondly, Kohlberg asserts that there is one psychological structure of morality: the cognitive pattern of organization that everyone has for processing information or for connecting experienced events in terms of this structure; this pattern determines one's moral maturity. Dykstra thinks that the capacity to organize cognitively information and to connect events in terms of reciprocity at its most complex level is not sufficient condition for moral maturity. Some people may be morally mature and yet not able to organize information and events in the way Kohlberg affirms they must at the highest stage. Thirdly, for Kohlberg, "we can analyze the nature of a person's morality by looking at the pattern of judgments a person makes about situations in which people have conflicting claims on one another" (p. 20). Dykstra says that insofar as these judgments are made on hypothetical dilemmas they cannot provide a gestalt

of the structure of a person's moral stage, given that a person's morality is an ongoing quality of life. Thus, disjointed responses to isolated situations do remove people from actual involvement in a situation. The world that Kohlberg presents to us is objective and manipulable. It is a world in which we are not involved as real selves. By this critique the book contends that Kohlberg's theory does not have any explicit religious claims because, for him, religious belief and moral development are independent of one another. Dykstra suggests that a moral world is a world of *mystery* rather than a world of *problems*. Therefore, visional ethics is mystery-encountering rather than problem-solving, as Kohlberg advocates. People and our world are mysteries. So, being moral means treating them or encountering them as such. Their meaning or the solution we can provide to them are inexhaustible.

The theological view introduced by Dykstra is supported by his ideas about Good, Ultimate Mystery, and Sin. For him morality depends on religious faith. A moral being (person) is drawn to and directed by the Ultimate Mystery (God). One's religious faith includes one's vision and character—which is a person's thinking, reasoning, believing, feeling, willing, and acting as a whole (p. 59). So, the religious and the moral are intimately connected in visional ethics. Juridical ethics tries to provide a measuring stick by which to evaluate the action, but in visional ethics action follows vision and vision depends on character which is not easily measurable.

Our way of seeing, feeling, and acting is influenced by revelation which, given to us, is and enables the transformation of our imagination. Because moral life is formation in Christian discipleship, this transformation, which leads to the emergence of new insight, is not possible without certain disciplines such as repentance (an inescapable first step of Christian moral life; it indicates that visional ethics takes seriously the sinfulness of a person), prayer, and service.

Christian educators need to note that moral education is not something *additional* to Christian Education. The latter being for moral life, Christian life has a "for the moral life" dimension. That is to say, in doing Christian education we do moral education as well (p. 117). The book has, in my conviction, a high scholarly interest in that among those who have dealt with Kohlberg's theory, especially Christian educators, Dykstra is the only one who disagrees with it on very strong grounds. However, he acknowledges some value in it: "What Kohlberg

has discovered can be called the stages in the development of social reasoning" (p. 28). By "social reasoning," he means the ability to adjudicate explicit claims in situations of social conflict.

Kohlberg is not a theologian. So, we cannot accuse him too much for the lack of explicit theological dimension. However, to use his theory presents a fundamental problem to the theological foundations of Christian education. Dykstra's critique of Kohlberg and his alternative construction go a long way toward resolving this problem.

Let it be said in closing that the ingenuity of Dykstra's research, the range of application found in the liveliness of the illustrations, and the importance of the issue addressed all make this study outstanding on the topic of "moral education for Christian life."

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*The Cost of Authority: Manipulation and Freedom in the New Testament*, by Graham Shaw. SCM Press, London, 1982; Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1983. Pp. xi + 292.

In *The Cost of Authority* Graham Shaw has produced a fascinating book. With simple declarative sentences the text has the power to engage the reader in arguments concerning issues which had heretofore seemed patent and non-negotiable.

One skips over the Preface and Introduction at one's own peril. Shaw uses the former to acknowledge his debt to Tolstoy. "His eye for the uses of religious doctrine by individuals and by institutions was astonishingly shrewd, particularly his refusal to allow the reader to detach religious doctrines from the interests of those who preach them" (p. ix). In the Introduction Shaw sets out the agenda for his engagement with selected books of Scripture. In what he admits to be a "highly selective vision of Christian historical experience," he rejects G. K. Chesterton's assertion that Christianity is "un-tried" as "glib deceit" (p. 2) and calls on Christianity to consider the effect of its two-thousand-year history upon the plausibility of its promises regarding freedom and new life. The disposition of Christianity to run counter to its "gospel of freedom, deliverance, and reconciliation" (p. 5), the use of the message "to sanctify a new system of social control, buttressed by bitterly divisive

social attitudes" (p. 5), and the "aggressively missionary stance [which] betrays the need of the faithful to convince themselves" (p. 10) are examples of the "repressive and conflict-laden aspects of Christianity" (p. 10) for which Shaw wishes to find an etiology. Arguing that these drawbacks to the "many positive contributions which the church has made to society and to individuals" are "an integral part of the Christian tradition" (p. 11), he attempts to have us take responsibility for our history by seeking to face up to it. Finding no major expression of Western Christianity which has managed to avoid the blight of an authoritarian and divisive inheritance, he concludes that the origins of the problem lie in the New Testament.

As long as the New Testament remains fundamentally uncriticized, it will function as a carrier of those destructive attitudes which have surfaced repeatedly in Christian history. The first objective must therefore be to outline an appropriate critical method, and then to apply it to the earliest New Testament texts (p. 12).

At this point Shaw might have fallen prey to two temptations to which others have succumbed. It is to his credit that he sidesteps them both. He could have taken the position that while the New Testament texts are authoritative, there would be no instances of personal or institutional authority surfacing because the nature of Christian leadership precludes such dynamics. Paul Harrison's *Power and Authority in the Free Church Tradition* exposes the games people play when they try to live out that conviction. Shaw plays no such games. He recognizes authority as a dimension of institutional life, especially the life of a historical institution. "The religious layman," he says (and I do wish he had not used exclusionary language), "is so used to the authoritative stance of modern Christian communities that he fails to perceive how tendentious is the original assertion of that authority in the texts" (p. 14). The real trick is *appraising* the authority within the life of the institution and coming to some evaluation of it. Is the authority one which is used to perpetuate a position which is threatened by instability that cannot be evaded? If so, warns Shaw, it will be used oppressively to foster illusion and silence criticism. On the other hand, an authority "which recognizes the temporary nature of its position of power is not threatened by the outlook and experience of others. . . . It can use its power to encourage the autonomy of others, while respecting their integrity" (p. 21).

The New Testament presents both types of authority side by side, creating internal contradictions. In the incarnation, as the culmination of the "liberating reversal" in the understanding of religious authority implicit in Jesus' teachings on rank and his washing of the disciples' feet, and in his gracious embrace of his vulnerability, Shaw sees the witness of the New Testament to the "authentic authority which both frees and reconciles" (p. 23). His intent is to use that "as a criterion for interpreting the New Testament as a whole" (p. 23). Some expressions of authority he will discern and identify as antithetical to this authentic authority, finding them arbitrary and divisive. Other expressions he will identify as being within the spirit of the gospel. He will not attempt to reconcile the two types.

Those who want an infallible guide in the New Testament will seek to reconcile all these contradictions. I do not believe that such an infallible guide is available, or that such reconciliation is convincing—it only produces a desperate attempt to save appearances (p. 23).

Shaw subjects the Pauline epistles and the Gospel of Mark to the examination his thesis on the presence of contradictory uses of authority in the New Testament suggests. It is here that he is to be congratulated for having avoided the second temptation to which he was subject. "This is not one more attack on the influence of Paul, a reversion to the favourite liberal charge of the nineteenth century that Paul perverted the religion of the Jesus of the Gospels" (p. 23). Shaw's perspective allows him to see more of a unity in the New Testament than Harnack could. Nothing will suffice here but an extended quotation:

The points of contact between these two very different literary phenomena lie in the strategies for consolidating power which they share. There is no parallel in any Gospel for Paul's direct defence of his apostolate, but many of the means he uses to conduct that defence are present, and so are some of his distinctive contradictions. The manipulation of eschatological anxiety, and the offer of privilege in another world; the divisive emphasis on divine judgment to provide sanctions to control behaviour, the stress on secrecy which gives to the initiates a special status, the prestige derived from persecution, and explanations of dissent, which render it harmless, accounts of the relation to secular power, which are both dismissive yet acquiescent, a stress on internal unity at the cost of external antagonism,

the fusion of the crucified identity with asceticism, the legitimization of the New Testament by reference to the Old, the exploitation of the social impact of prayer; above all a continuity in the conception of the Christian privilege, as sonship, inheritance, election, and the possession of the Spirit. All these bind together the Pauline epistles and the four Gospels (p. 24).

The bulk of *The Cost of Authority* is a consideration of the Pauline corpus (I Thessalonians, Philippians, I and II Corinthians, Colossians, Philemon and Romans) and the Gospel of Mark. Shaw concludes his section on Paul with a more positive appraisal than one might have anticipated from his Introduction.

Paul uses the rhetoric of deliverance and reconciliation; at the same time he often acts in ways which domineer and divide. . . . The crucial issue must . . . be whether Paul simply uses language of freedom and reconciliation to clothe aggressive self-assertion, or whether he submits himself, albeit partially, to the discipline of the gospel he proclaims. . . . I believe this to be the case. . . . The measure of Paul's honesty is that he has not suppressed the radical demands of freedom and reconciliation which, far from simply sanctioning his leadership, frequently provide the basis for criticizing it (pp. 183-84).

I suspect that Shaw's treatment of the Spirit and of the Resurrection will engender the most specific criticism of the content of the book. Once "the reader admits the possibility of human freedom and of reconciliation between men" (p. 13) to be the message of the Gospel which celebrates "the conquest not of physical death, but of the fear of death in life" (p. 281), he or she is well on the way to accepting the most pungent of Shaw's proposals. The most concise statement of his pronouncements on the matter is found in his discussion of Romans.

Once it has been granted that charismatic phenomena have a social rather than a supernatural origin (and the presence of such manifestations in other religious and indeed in secular contexts makes that conclusion unavoidable), much of Paul's gospel crumbles. The divisive and repressive aspects of the Spirit in Paul's thought may make this seem but a slight loss, but with the Spirit must also disappear the most widespread basis for belief both in the resurrection of Jesus and in our own life after death. The excitement of the privilege which Paul offered his followers was

the participation in Jesus' Spirit: that assured them of both Jesus' life and their own life beyond death. Once that Spirit has been explained in social terms the privilege he professed has proved specious and the promise illusory (p. 167).

Reliance on the testimony of the Spirit is seen as recourse to a privileged epistemology, and as such, inimical to reconciliation within the human family. The Resurrection, to which the Spirit testifies, becomes an illusion invoked "in a vain attempt to mitigate the stark finality of Jesus' death" (p. 268).

More presentation of the author's text might only serve to work against the reader's purchase of the book and direct appraisal of it. Before I close, however, I should make two more comments. The first has to do with style. There is no index in the book, nary a footnote, and no direct reference to any text other than the Bible and Tolstoy. This lends an immediacy of a certain uninterrupted nature to the work; at times it reads like a runaway train. It also means that the reader is never quite sure how Shaw is led to some of the assertions he makes. Given the nature of his argument, his presentation would profit from the buttressing of some other authoritative commentators. The un-annotated style also lends some confusion to attempts to relate

Shaw's position to that of anyone else in the theological world. There are times when he seems to be sympathetic to the liberation theologians; but is he, really? There are a few places where he seems to be rejecting a Barthian positivism; but is he, really? Most often he is calling down a pox on every house—without citing the standard bearer of that house who is his most specific target. We are deprived of direct recourse to the substance of the argument in which Shaw does or does not find merit. We are asked to trust his digest of it to be accurate and authoritative.

Finally, *The Cost of Authority* represents a particular kind of pastoral theology. Shaw traces his concern for the use of authority and manipulation in Scripture to inconsistencies "I have first encountered as discrepancies and misgivings in pastoral experience" (p. viii) and vice versa. The book, whatever we may individually think of the content of Shaw's theology, is a challenge to each of us who is in a relation to others in which authority is a prominent dynamic. It encourages us to take a hard look at how we use our authority and the effects of our use on the values we espouse in our ministries.

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